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With the Publishers Compt

THE
COQUET-DALE FISHING SONGS

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

[Thomas Doubleday

THE
COQUET-DALE FISHING SONGS.

NOW FIRST COLLECTED AND EDITED

BY

A NORTH-COUNTRY ANGLER.

"NOS HÆC NOVIMUS ESSE NIHIL."

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCLII

TO
THE MEMBERS
OF THE
COQUET-DALE FISHING CLUB.

GENTLEMEN,—If it be true that human life, as the sage Samuel Johnson has asserted, be “made up of trifles,” I shall feel less necessity for an apology in dedicating, as I am now about to venture to dedicate, the following Lyrics. Of the fascinating recreation which gave rise to their composition, you are already patrons; and if, whilst in pursuit of your favourite sport, they shall help to confer a new interest upon any of the varied beauties of that Vale of Coquet which is so dear to the Angler, they will have fulfilled the intention of their authors, as well as of their editor. These songs have already been widely

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(RECAP)

disseminated, and in some cases frequently reprinted; nor have they been undistinguished by the praise, not only of the Angler, but of the poet, of the critic, and of the bibliographer. To your patronage, however, they must owe the privilege of being now laid before the public in a collective shape; and if the history of their authorship be of any interest, to you the world must be indebted for it. Still, that this little publication may give a fresh zest to the pleasures of those who seek them in the charming valley which it commemorates, and add to the numbers of those who, whilst they cultivate a healthful and manly sport, can admire the wild and picturesque varieties of the scenes amidst which it must be sought, is the chief wish and most sanguine hope of,

GENTLEMEN,

Your faithful and obedient Servant,

THE EDITOR.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE,	1
THE FISHER'S GARLAND,	35
COQUET-SIDE, ETC.,	49
THE AULD FISHER'S WELCOME TO COQUET-SIDE,	55
THE AULD FISHER'S FAREWHEEL,	61
"THE COQUET FOR EVER!"	67
THE FISHER'S CALL,	72
THE OLD FISHER'S CHALLENGE,	75
THE OLD ANGLER'S TRIUMPH,	81
THE FISHER'S INVITATION TO HIS FRIEND IN NEWCASTLE,	86
THE AULD FISHER'S LAST WISH,	91
AULD AND YOUNG,	98
THE ANGLER'S ADIEU FOR THE SEASON,	102
UP THE WREIGH!	107
THE FISHER'S COURTSHIP,	111
THE MORNIN' AIRLY,	115
THE AULD FISHER'S ADVICE,	119
CONCLUSION,	123
APPENDIX,	141
AIRS TO WHICH THE PRECEDING SONGS WERE COMPOSED,	157

Go ! trace yon joyous river from its source
To the blue champaign of the distant sea ;
Now bounding, a young savage, fierce and free,
Amid the cliffs, wild nurses of its force :
Now, gentler, straying in a devious course,
Sweetly diversified in pool and stream ;
Now purling music underneath the beam ;
Now foaming in a torrent, rude and hoarse.
Beautiful stream ! yet beauteous still in vain ;
Doom'd to yon ocean's fell and final clutch ;
'Mid scenes unknown,—it dreameth not of such,—
'Mid tangled meads and groves, beneath the main,
To flow for ever ! Thou need'st not repine,
All-eloquent stream. Man's fate is e'en as thine.

P R E F A C E.

It is a truth not often adverted to, that pleasure is not a unit, but a compound. He that cares to make such a search will find that almost everything coming under the category of human enjoyment is made up of many circumstances and collaterals, the aggregate of which is called "a pleasure." Hence many human pursuits are in reality much less gross than, on a first view, they would seem to be. The coarsest voluptuary includes in his practice more of refinements than he is at all aware of. We combine without knowing that we do so. The associations of ideas are so subtle as at times to become, in all probability, hardly traceable by human sagacity. When Prior, after enjoying the company of Harley and St John, went at last to Long-acre, to eat bread and cheese, and drink beer with the old cobbler and his wife, whom he had known in his youth, and before fortune smiled upon his genius, he was peradventure actuated by feelings more noble, as well as amiable, than any which his critics have given him credit for possessing. Of the associations by the

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united force of which he was actuated, he possibly had not himself any distinct idea. The early reminiscences; the gratitude for the kindness of other days; the secret contrast of the past with the present; the transition from the studied courtliness of the titled great to the rough and rude, but honest and sincere, simplicity of the industrious obscure;—all these mingled feelings must have been vibrating through a mind keenly alive to such impulses, when engaged in what the unreflecting would believe to be a low and whimsical propensity: so complicated are human motives, even in what seem to be the meanest actions—so liable are men to be misunderstood and misconstrued—so hidden and so abstruse are the real springs of action—so strange a problem is often the true and real foundation of pleasure and of pain in mankind.

The case of Prior is an extreme one; but from extremes we argue to other things, not dissimilar in nature, but less striking in circumstance. We take that case which is boldest in feature to illustrate others which are less bold. We see there are men innumerable finding intense enjoyment in pursuits which, to the dull or shallow, or censorious, shall afford food for a superfluous reprobation, or a mistaken pity. Thus is it with field-sports—they have at all times been objected to by the professors of a self-styled but unreasoning humanity, as embodying in their very essence the stigma of coarse and gratuitous cruelty. Never was charge more unfounded. They have formed

the chosen pastime of minds the most noble and talents the most diversified. The poet and the statesman, the politician and the sage, the divine and the philosopher, have found in them endless recreation and perennial excitement. Why has this been? Not surely because the sports of the field involve the taking away of animal life—the characters of the men who have been most heartily addicted to rural sports controvert the insinuation; but because there is involved in such pursuits a constant game of chances, more delicately complicated than any that the wit of man ever invented, and also because those chances involve, in their perpetual flux and change, the rapid, vivid, and masterly contemplation and survey of the most varied and beautiful scenery that Nature has prepared, in her most lavish mood, to gladden, astonish, and elevate the heart of man. It is in the knowledge of his ground that the delicate craft of the sportsman lies. Upon this knowledge, only to be acquired by the keenest and most successful observation, the skill and the reward of the huntsman, the shooter, and the angler rest. Each must be aware of the minutest habits of the animal of which he is in quest, or that quest is vain. Every undulation of landscape, every form of thicket, every description of vegetation and of soil, every turn of water, every change in the river's bed, nay, the strength and direction of every wind that blows, and the hue of every revolution in the atmosphere—be it for heat or for cold, for sunshine or for

cloud—must be watched by and known to the sportsman, or his chase is aimless, and his labour lost. But if this is true of the rest, doubly true is it of the angler's fitful trade: the current of his sport veers with every fluctuation of the air, and every meander, however fantastic, of the waters; upon the interposition of a cloud before the sunbeam; upon the contention of crag and stream; upon the eddying of the mountain breeze; upon the shadow of the boughs that long to kiss the mirrored face of the long still pool, as the child does his image in the glass; upon the thunder-shower that is pendant amongst the hills, and, with constancy like fascination, follows the course of the wild waters with which it is destined to mingle. Upon accidents like these, evanescent, but beautiful as dreams, hangs the angler's day-long occupation, and the fate of many a cunning wile and many a skilful cast. Sunbeams, clouds, breezes, eddies, currents, cataracts, cliffs, trees, and flowers, are, "by his so potent art," made the angler's agents, and the beauteous ministers of his will! What wonder, then, that minds and souls, the strongest as well as the most refined, should discover fascination in a game where Nature herself, in her most delightful moods, is one of the players, and playfully tosses down upon the board both smiles and frowns, as elements of the gentle strategy? What "royal game," how exalted soever, can command a pageantry like this? Compared with these, the tinsel splendours of the tournament and the tilt-yard, the

skill of archery and the witcheries of horsemanship, the boisterous chances of the tennis-court, or the golden knights and castles and jewelled kings and queens of imperial chess, sink flatly and meanly upon the imagination ; and even in idea we feel

“ The toiling pleasure sicken into pain ! ”

To fancy, as some have done, that the taking of life is a feature at all of such a process as this, is one of the stupidest of hallucinations. Except in its necessity, it forms no element in a combination so beautiful. It is not seen ; it is not felt ; or, if momentarily seen or felt, the thought and vision are lost in the moment that follows. No sportsman, beyond the instant, ever felt himself a life-bereaver. Who contemplates a picture of dead game with feelings of bloodthirstiness ? Who ever contemplated the game itself with such feelings ? Yet in such things the painter's eye and the sportsman's are the same. Can we get further ? It must be admitted to be a chimerical vagary, when those who smile and enjoy themselves over the quarry must yet frown on him who strikes it. Let us be consistent. If this way of thinking is to pass for laudable, the praise must be on account of that merit which attends the refinement of mistake, and the elaboration of contradiction. No ingenuity, however, can transmute the shallow into the profound ; and to caricature the moral sense will never pass as an excuse for poverty of thought, or narrowness of apprehension. It is a poor occupation to libel the beautiful

and the true, because it involves evidence of that end to which all life is doomed, from the king to the beggar, from the monarch of the forest to the insect on the breeze. If we look narrowly, we shall find that hardly any human movement is unattended with destruction of some sort ; and we shall also find that the loss of one life generally involves the salvation of many. It is useless, in fact, to refine our humanity too far ; it is imperfect, and will not bear it, and the whole process merges in a *reductio ad absurdum*. Nor must we ever forget, when these subjects are treated of, that the love of the chase, in all its varieties, is as much an instinct of the natural man as is the appetite for animal food. By the chase, in his uncultivated state, he ever lives ; and all the difference that refinement and civilisation bring about is, that, instead of killing wild animals for food, the philosopher or sentimentalist kills and eats them after domesticating them—no great improvement of the process ! It is needless to insist further on this topic. Perhaps the very best answer that ever was given to a sentimentalist of this emasculated class was that of a butcher's boy to an ultra-refined lady of the blue-stocking tribe, who remonstrated with him, according to her tiffany phrase, on "the cruelty of killing a beautiful little lamb," which he was carrying to the slaughter-house. "Would you eat him alive, ma'am ?" was the lad's ready answer ; and in that question, and that reply, resides the substance, or rather

essence, of all that can be said on either side of this controversy—if such a dispute on such a matter be worth the name. So much for “pseudo-humanity” as applied to field-sports—angling amongst the rest. Let us now turn to a better branch of our subject.

If angling be one of the most delightful of all the sports which can afford recreation to the wise as well as the idle, to the refined as well as the simple, to the cultivator of science and letters as well as the cultivator of the soil—

“And that it is, great nature cries aloud
Through all her works”—

of all British streams the river Coquet is, perhaps, one of the best adapted for this enchaining pursuit. There are doubtless many which run their course through scenery more strikingly grand, especially in Scotland; and there are many in England which wind their way in the midst of a landscape more uniformly beautiful; but not one, perhaps, which can show a more charming and complete variety of all descriptions of scenery and of landscape concentrated upon the course of a single favoured stream. Running through the very midst of the wild county of Northumberland, from amidst that chaos of fell and heath which constitutes its westernmost boundary, and forms one of the most desolate and stern portions of the far-famed Scottish Border, the Coquet traverses the whole breadth of the county, from west to east, until it joins the German Ocean a

few miles below the ruins of the romantic, old, baronial hold of Warkworth, after having passed the empty Hermitage and ruined keep of that now almost classic spot. From the source of the river to its junction with the sea the direct distance is small, being far short of a geographical degree. Taking the windings of the current into the account, it is of course much more; but, during this short course, the angler who threads its mazes contemplates a variety of scenic beauties not easily to be matched, within such a distance, on any stream whatever,—almost every ten miles presenting to the eye some striking change of river landscape, embracing all the beautiful phases that even the landscape of the stream can claim. From wild and silent hills, destitute of tree or bush, or human habitation, and trodden only by the solitary shepherd, we pass after a time to the wooded crag, whose dwarfed and scanty foliage barely attempts to screen the violence of the river beneath—now boiling amidst huge and moss-grown mountain stones, the *debris* of past convulsions. Anon, we have the expanded valley through which the released waters wander at will, amid lofty ridges on either hand, capped with heather, and the resting-place of the heathcock and of the cloud; whilst below we have haughs on which cattle feed, and where patches of cultivation and habitations, scattered on the mountain-side, betoken the presence and hand of man. Again the scene changes, and we are closed in by a land-

scape of savage grandeur ; the river far below ; and, above, the loose grey crags, piled upon each other as if by some recent convulsion of nature, mixed only with fern and the purple heather. Again opens a valley where a small hamlet gets room to stand, and a few small half-reclaimed patches afford food for the inhabitants. Further on, the river is again shut in ; but loftier trees now assert the presence of a less savage soil, and the river, diversified into deep pool and rapid stream, winds more tranquilly amidst those wooded but romantic cliffs which Bewick loved to draw,—gladdened now and then by a sight of the ploughman at his quiet trade, or the stately steer or young heifer reclined, chewing the cud upon the sunny bank, where wood gives place to pasturage and alternates with the open field. Again, we are lost on a sudden amid silent, lofty, and moss-grown trees—amid Druid-like solitudes, where the lonely angler almost starts at the sound of the waters as they rush over their gloomy bed, where the heron is the solitary inhabitant, and where the strongest and most cheerful summer sun can only partially relieve and chequer the gloom produced by a combination so solemn. From this we pass to open and champaign country, where the hand of man is predominant ; where smiling and cultivated fields alternate with groves of more tempered beauty ; and where the smoke ascends equally in peace and in gladness, from the lofty chimneys of the hall, or the humble cottage

of the hind ; where "the may" is on the hedge, the cowslip in the field, and the wild-rose in the lane ; where the bridge and the ford accommodate the frequent traveller ; and where the art of man begins to be at odds with nature which shall be ascendant. Such are the general characters of the landscape of this lovely and diversified stream : let us now glance at the even more interesting detail.

The river Coquet takes its rise amongst that vast range of hills which form the border between the English county of Northumberland and the Scotch county of Roxburghshire. Amidst this ocean, as it were, of hills, the best known is The Carter Fell, over which passes the road, which being carried up the vale of Reed by Otterburn, Horsley, and the solitary hamlet and chapel of Bury-ness, or The Burness, as it is more familiarly called, ascends and crosses the lofty Carter, near the summit of which is the Border, descending again on the north side of the fell to Jedburgh. From the side of a hill within about three miles of Carter Fell, the Coquet has its source ; and it is remarkable that within this narrow circuit three rivers have their rise, all running different ways. Near the south foot of Carter Fell springs the Reed, which thence bends its way southwards, through a country most desolately wild, to join the North Tyne. Within three miles of the spring-head of Reed rises the Coquet ; and not far from Coquet Head, in a beautiful amphitheatre formed by the hills,

untrodden and unseen save by the shepherd or the solitary angler, gush forth the first sprightly runnings of the Kale, an exquisitely picturesque little stream, which bends its way northwards towards the Jed. Of the Coquet the general course is eastward—though multiform are the windings by which it first makes its way amidst the hilly chaos through which it has to find a devious way. "No scenery can be more peculiar than is that which surrounds the infant Coquet during the first miles of its sparkling course. It is closely shut in by lofty hills on all sides. They are nearly destitute of vegetation, save that of the short fine grass with which they are clothed. In their more precipitous portions the grey crag often shows itself; and where it meets the turf a few wild-flowers, including the dwarf-rose, peradventure spring. But this is all. Neither bush nor tree is to be seen for many miles; but amidst the green mountain and the grey crag sports the sparkling river, like virtue cheerful amidst poverty, and the purer for its simplicity and its penury. Amidst these silent hills there is a quiet charm ~~peculiar to such scenes, and nowhere else to be found~~. Nothing is to be heard but the occasional bleat of the sheep, or, far more rarely, the long, resonant whistle of the curlew. Between one habitation and another many miles intervene. A faint track amidst the grass, following the windings of the river, alone proves that man sometimes passes. In winter even this guide is gone, and the shepherd must keep

the hill-tops ; and he who travels far must trust to his pocket-compass for keeping his direction. At a little distance from the course of the Coquet the country becomes still more savage. The bog and the heather cover the surface of the fells ; and he who wanders there may wander many miles in quest of human habitation, or aught reminding him of the face of man. "

From amidst the hills where it is cradled, a large number of rivulets run into and speedily swell the volume of the river, as it runs over a rocky bottom, amidst the *debris* of the surrounding crags, and purls over frequent ledges of the grey rock on its course by the house at Blind Burn, and by the Trows, down to the little homestead of Barra Burn. These rivulets are of small size, and generally rather precipitous in their course, but so full of trout that even the smallest pool is never without inhabitants well worthy of the attention of the angler. How they got there is a question not always easy to answer. Many of these streamlets fall into the Coquet over precipices many feet in height : the Trows Burn throws itself over a steep rock not less than thirty feet high ; and one and all are so full of fish that the worm-fisher need hardly drop a line in vain, for there with the worm or natural fly alone can they be taken, the diminutive size of the stream precluding all other modes. That any fish from the river beneath should make their way up into many of these burns is an evident impossibility. How, then, came they there ? Are they the offspring of spawn carried

thither by birds—by the wader heron, by the rapid wild duck, or by the shy curlew? This seems to be the only conceivable solution; but there they are, adding another to the volume of mysteries of that Providence which knows how to people the island in the remote Pacific, and wills that life shall be wherever life may be sustained. Constantly supplied from the prolific sources formed by these tributary rivulets, the river Coquet, from its spring-head down to Barra Burn, and for some few miles lower, affords the finest water for the worm-fisher, or the troller with minnow, that can be conceived. It does not, thus far, exhibit those fine streams, running over a bed principally of pebbles and more minute alluvial matter, in which the fly-fisher delights, but struggles on over an irregular and rocky bottom, now foaming over a ledge of rock—now toiling a troublous course amidst boulder-stones, the fragments of surrounding crags—and now, peradventure, for a short distance, glittering and glancing in a pool over a bottom of the solid grey rock, in the fissures of which alone the trout or salmon can make a hold. In water such as this, and so stored, the skilful troller is sure of his prey. Every stone and every ledge afford a hold for a trout; and when the day is favourable, nothing can exceed the sport which the accomplished minnow or worm fisher may obtain in this water, which, for this description of angling, is hardly to be matched, probably, by any existing stream. Neither can it be exhausted of its

finny stores, for to sweep any portion of it by the net is utterly impracticable ; and for the great destroyer, the otter, its treeless and rocky banks afford no shelter.

Below Barra Burn, for several miles, the river preserves nearly the same character, passing in its course through one of those defiles which are only to be met with where the stream runs through a bold and rocky country. This remarkable cut is known by the characteristic name of The Wedder Loup. It is a great many yards in length, the rock on each side being as steep and as perpendicular, and nearly as smooth, as a wall. In this strait the Coquet is confined to a space so narrow that an active man may easily leap over ; and the legend is, that the failure of a thief, who made the attempt with a stolen wedder on his back, and who was drowned, and found dead with the legs of the sheep tied over his neck, gave its title to this singular spot. Some miles farther down, in the vicinity of Linn Brig, the river has found a way through another strait of a different character. The crags are equally steep, but much higher. The solitary passenger, who seeks this spot for the sake of angling, looks down upon the river from a height of thirty to forty feet. When the water is clear, he may here see numberless trout, some of an immense size, disporting themselves in the deep water. But they cannot be disturbed ; no available tackle would be of strength to draw them from such a retreat. With the "leister" they cannot

be touched. The net here is in vain ; and, in a flood, the water rushes through with an impetuosity too great to allow even a baited line to be effectual, if made use of. From Linn Brig down towards Alwinton the river shows symptoms of change. The continuity of the crag becomes broken ; in a few places, strata of black vegetable mould exhibit themselves ; the pools become longer, the bed of the stream more alluvial and pebbly, and, by the addition of some tributary burns of a larger size, the volume of water is visibly increased. The fly-fisher now begins to feel himself more at home, and, as he descends the river, new and changed scenery gradually meets his eye, and opens before him.

Alwinton is a pleasant hamlet, situated in a sort of amphitheatre formed here by the hills amidst which the Coquet runs. Its few houses stand upon a level "haugh," as a river plain is termed in the north ; and in its immediate vicinity the Coquet is joined by its greatest tributary stream, the Alwine. This union has been celebrated in verse of no mean merit or character—nor undeservedly, for by it the importance of the Coquet is wonderfully increased. Its streams now exhibit a body of water dangerous to ford when at all swelled, and rushing onward, in their course to ocean, with an impetuosity not seen until now. At Alwinton, "a change comes o'er the spirit" of the angler's trade. The river now alters its character and its scenery. The cultivated begins to be mingled with

the savage and with the wild. Wood, though consisting of little else than the alder and the willow, begins to appear on the brink of the stream. Towards Harbottle, and its village and ruined castle, plantations, mostly of fir, the haunt of the blackcock, begin to appear. They climb a short way up the hill, where again they are met by the grey crag and purple heather, the home of the red grouse, the curlew, and the golden plover, which haunt these lofty fells. Near the summit, we see at a great distance the Drake Stone, a huge fragment of rock, standing like a ruined and time-worn Border tower. Behind the summit of that hill lies that gloomy tarn known by the name of Harbottle Lough, a solitude of such peculiar and depressing loneliness that no traveller ever passed it without awe, or without feeling, by an extraordinary instinct, that some dark tale is connected with it, such as he will shudder at when he hears. On the calmest day, the black and sullen waters of this dismal pool are ever in motion, as if to prevent human eye from peering into their dark recesses. The place seems totally desolate. Shut in on all sides by the grey crag and the heather, which surround it like a wall, no life seems to enter there. The solitary heron is not seen ; and if the whistle of the curlew or of the stone-plover be heard, where is the bird ? The human wanderer on the moors alone tracks past it, and feels relieved when he has passed.

Where, however, is the Coquet during this episode ?

—Pressing, as boyhood does into manhood, amidst new scenes and mutations yet untried. Reinforced by the alliance of the Alwine—which, rising in Kidland towards the range of the lofty Cheviots, receives a portion of their many springs—it descends with a redoubled current to Harbottle, where its scenery totally changes. On a rocky knoll, steep of access, but commanded by the neighbouring hills, stands the once-famed castle of Harbottle, erst the sojourn of royalty, and in ancient times the key of this pass into the more cultivated lands of Northumberland. Its glory has been long departed : it is now the ruin of a ruin. In its fosse, and around the fragments of wall that still resist the scythe of Time, a few cattle graze. Amid its courts, once trodden by princes, the Northumbrian milkmaid carols morning and evening. Its ivied tower is the haunt of the owl, the night-jar, or the hawk. The blast of the trumpet and the challenge of the sentinel are heard no more. The noise of the rushing river is alone audible at night, where kings once feasted and nobles served. The turn of the Coquet round the ruins of Harbottle Castle is beautifully picturesque. The cliffs on both sides are lofty and rugged. From amidst their fissures spring the stunted oak, the mountain-ash, the hazel, and the alder. The bed of the river is composed of rocky ledges, mixed with huge stones, amidst which the river boils and struggles with a constant toil. Just above this bend, between the hamlet of Alwinton and the little village of Harbottle,

the fly-fisher will find streams worth the best of his art ; but, behind Harbottle Castle the writhing and turmoil of the water, foaming in wrath and trouble amid its rocks, will again perplex him ; until, making a short cut downwards, and passing Harbottle House, the wildly-situated seat of the Clennells, he comes upon the most exquisite streams for his purpose that Northumberland can show amongst her many rivers—the haunts of the angler, and scenes of many an exploit in the times that are past.

From the bend above Sharperton, commencing near the ford, and taking that part of the river that runs in direction almost southerly, until it bends again eastward above Hepple Tower, the angler will find some streams as lovely as fly-fisher ever dreamed of, or the fancy of the youthful sportsman ever pictured. The vale of Coquet, hitherto confined, here expands itself suddenly. Cultivation, narrowed indeed in its limits, but forming a beautiful contrast with the wild and lofty moors and fells, now begins to show itself. We now begin to see hedgerows. On the left is the little township of Sharperton ; on the right, further down, the romantic little village of Halystane, with its time-worn church, and its pellucid fountain, now enclosed and beautified, where St Paulinus baptised so many Britons—the whole being set off by the trees of Wood-Hall, and that dark gorge of the fells, from which the little burn of Halystane steals to join the Coquet. From this beautiful spot the river runs through a

lovely vale, in a fine alternation of pool and stream, over beds of pebbles, amid haughs as level as a bowling-green, and dotted with sheep ; until, passing close on the right the natural wood of Dews Hill, close at bottom of the hills, it at last precipitates itself against that lofty and perpendicular rocky promontory, on the brow of which a Roman cohort once kept watch and ward ; and then, after forming a pool of tremendous depth, is suddenly driven to the left, and again runs eastward by Hepple, Flotterton, and Thropton, threading its course, like a twisted silver thread, down one of the noblest valleys of the combined beautiful and wild that is often to be met with. In this tract of water an ardent fly-fisher may spend the live-long day, and follow his sport until the weight of his fish is more than he can carry. In that long pool and its two streams, at head and foot, which skirts the wood of Dews Hill, he may, if the wind be a few points from the north of the west, capture enough of fish to satisfy an ordinary sportsman, the month being, of course, March, April, or May. In the months of June, July, or August, the angler may, if the breeze be strong and the day cloudy, or after the heavy thunder-shower has fallen, find sport to satisfy even the fastidious, amidst these streams ; but let him who wishes to experience the glory of Coquet fly-fishing, visit this in the finest day that March will give him, or early April afford, and his wishes can hardly fail of gratification.

From the turn above the old Peel, or tower of

Hepple, down to Rothbury town, we have scenery again of a new character. Let the reader image, if he can, the Coquet winding its way, and twisting, like some beautiful and glittering snake, down the bosom of a valley of noble dimensions and a wide expansion. On the left bank, which rises gradually, are the farms and hedgerows of Hepple and of Flotterton. At Thropton the Wreigh—a fatal stream, still famous for the carnage of that raid which is yet remembered as “the woeful Wednesday of the Wreigh Hill”—runs in from the north-west; but on the right the scene is loftier. South of the Coquet we now have a full view of the northern side of that lofty and mountainous ridge known as the Simondside Hills—the summits of which rise probably not less than sixteen hundred to eighteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. Beneath these lofty precipices, beaten by so many storms, the ridges are bare rock, amidst which the heather is sparsely scattered. The grouse makes her nest amid the solitary moors. They are trodden only by the sportsman. The shepherd rarely visits them. Far beneath them, after a shower, the clouds often lie like tired children fretted into rest. From their highest points the shooter, if the day be clear, obtains a splendid view of the whole region of Cheviot, and of the Border fells to the westward. Below, the landscape softens. About one-third of the way up is visible the ancient little village of Tosson, surrounded by a few scattered trees, with its farmsteads and pastures.

Further down still is Rothbury Tower bosomed in wood, now the rectory ; and below are the silver windings of the Coquet, running amidst level haughs, where cattle and sheep quietly graze ; where the scattered whins begin to bloom ; and where the laden angler may be seen from afar, wending his devious way down to Rothbury town, the sea-mark of his travel. Down this beautiful expanse of valley every description of water fitted for the angler's trade is to be found. The rough and rapid current ; the long, and deep, and stony pool ; the stream, purling or dimpling ;—all are there. Generally the current flows over beds of the finest pebble, and amid green and level haughs, unbroken by bush or tree. Occasionally, it will approach some rough bank, where the whin, the thorn, the bramble, the hazel, and the green brecken intermingle : but this is rarely ; and the fly-line of the angler floats safely upon the breeze, even in his most careless moments, resting only on the water, on the pebbly margin, or on the green haugh on the concave side of the lucid stream.

Welcome is Rothbury to the fisher who has, early in the morning, crossed the country ; has thrown his first fly in the streams by Sharperton ; has passed Haly-stane, and Hepple, and Flotterton, overladen but still unwearied ; and, having halted at Thropton to refresh his tired limbs and exhausted spirits, reaches Rothbury's market-cross as evening begins to shade in, and the lights begin to glimmer from the windows. Roth-

bury is cheerful at sunny mid-day, but dimly sober towards evening ; for then the hills close in again, and in their gorge the town of Rothbury stands. Its site has been evidently selected for shelter, being shut in by hills, save towards the west. To the north, behind it, the hills are steep and broken into crags, amidst which the goat—numerous here—alone finds footing. To the south rise the hills forming a portion of the great Simondside ridge ; and to the east the crags close in and cross each other, as if determined to bar the Coquet from further passage. ! (The town has all the marks of hoar antiquity on its aspect. The stone bridge of three arches, which here spans the Coquet, bears the marks of age. The low tower of the church, which stands near the river, is weather-worn, and the whole structure the worse for time. The houses have all the impress of time ; and the very orchards, with their moss-grown trees, seem to have smiled for years gone by, and for generations now buried. The old market-cross is half in ruins ; the very stocks in the churchyard, like a toothless mastiff, seem to have lost their terrors amidst the ravages of age. Rothbury is, in short, the *beau ideal* of a dim, old Border town—too insignificant to be defended, and too humble to tempt the hand of the plunderer : a collection of grey old houses that might have been standing when Flodden Field was fought, or when the moon was shining above the conflict at Otterburn." Below the town is one of the most remarkable scenes that

the river Coquet has to boast. The crags here shut the river so closely in, that it seems to have been compelled to scoop for itself a way through many score yards of the solid rock. This remarkable natural channel is at the top so narrow, that, at many points, an active man may with ease spring over. This feat, however, is full of peril. Tradition says that more than one person has been immersed in this dangerous gulf, but that no one to whom this happened was ever seen again. Certain it is, the river boils so impetuously amidst the hollows of the rock that nearly arches it over, that escape with life for any who shall be entangled there seems quite impossible. In times of heavy flood, the river rises above its confined channel, and sweeps over the bare surface of the solid rock in which it is formed; but at other times it boils black and sullen within its prison, from which it issues with great force, and, as if blind and reeling from confinement, throws itself first northwards, and, then meeting with another stop, is dashed in an almost opposite direction, running underneath bold crags, until it again is forced into its eastern course, near Little Mill, and is joined by another rivulet, which, running from the moors to the southward, down a savage and rocky glen, join the Coquet at this secluded spot, as if to bear it company. Hence, for some miles, we pass through scenery, than which any more extraordinary is hardly to be met with.

From Little Mill downwards, the hills on each side are exceedingly high and precipitous. The herbage is scanty, and the blue-grey cragstone bepatches their sides, and is ever and anon bare to the day ; whilst, at intervals, the rains have worn deep rocky channels down the ribs of the hills, which in wet weather form a series of cataracts as they approach the river. On the north bank it is less steep ; and here an undulating road has been formed, which follows the course of the stream at a great height above it. One side of this road is variegated with occasional bushes and small scrubby trees, such as the rocky soil will bear ; but the crags, after a little distance, rise quite perpendicularly into a line of precipice, which extends for two or three miles. On this wild and singular spot some strange convulsion of nature must have taken place. Between the precipice and the road lie countless fragments of rock, many of immense size and of fantastic shape, heaped in confusion upon each other. On the verge of the precipice some seem ready to fall. In some places the accumulation is so enormous that huge masses seem almost in the act of rolling upon those who gaze from below. The whole is intermixed with the green brecken, and here and there a dwarf tree, which has found room to root itself even amidst this ruin of nature's making. At one spot a clear and lucid little stream of water, known as Reavers' Well, as if to bless the thirsty traveller, finds a path from amidst this *debris* of a former world, and, crossing

the road, seeks a devious way to the river beneath. At the Crag-end—which is the conclusion of this wild scene—stands a lonely shepherd's cottage, nestled beneath the very avalanche of fragments that seem to the unaccustomed eye ready to crush it. In the shepherd's garden, a plot of a few yards square, stand two or three moss-grown plum-trees, which in autumn may be seen to be covered with a minute green plum. Many feet beneath, amidst crags mixed with trees and bushes, amidst rocks variegated with the black thorn, the thorn, the alder, the ash, the oak, the wild-rose, and the bramble, and amidst nooks where the primrose and the violet yet venture to blow, rushes the toiling river, as if panting for enlargement from this place of solitary horror, and eager to seek the face and habitations of man.

After the Crag-end is passed, the aspect of the country suddenly alters. The landscape now becomes that of a cultivated region. Passing the cottages of Pepper Haugh, the river now purls smiling along, amidst corn-field, pasture, and meadow—now shadowed by well-wooded steepes, now fringed only by the willow, the saugh, the hazel, and the alder; until once more the wandering waters become entangled amid the rocks of Brinkburn, and a scene of the highest picturesque beauty, though prisoned within narrow bounds, meets the eye of him who, with rod in hand, follows the windings of the waters.

The ancient abbey of Brinkburn, Brenckburn, or,

as it was called of yore, Brekenburn, has its site amidst precipitous and lofty cliffs on the north side of the Coquet, where the waters, compelled by their cliffy barrier, take a sharp and sudden turn. The cliffs on both sides become suddenly here of immense height, especially on the southern brink, where the rocks cannot be much less than two hundred feet high. They are crowned with rich wood ; and in every cleft the mountain-ash, the oak, or the sycamore, has rooted itself. On the north side of this romantic bend of the stream the remains of the abbey stand. Taking date about the reign of Henry III., their architecture is plain but massive. The central tower is tolerably entire, but the other portions of the structure are totally ruinous, and in a state of melancholy dilapidation. Close to the ruins stands the modern house, and, a hundred yards farther down, a water-mill enlivens by its noise the seclusion of this singular spot, where the cawings of the rook and jackdaw by day, and the occasional howl of the fox by night, are the sounds mostly heard. During the earlier period of English history, when the wild waste of Rothbury Forest extended thus far—when the country was covered with natural wood, the domicile only of the roebuck and the stag, or peradventure the wolf—few sites could have exceeded this spot in its utter seclusion and solitude. It was more than once sacked by the Scotch moss-troopers, who regarded the sanctity of the possessions of the Church as little as they did

that of any other property ; and the story goes, that on one occasion they were only directed to the prey, of which they were in fruitless search, by the ringing of the convent-bell.

From the abbey of Brinkburn, down by Tod-stead to Weldon Bridge, and thence downwards, passing Linden Hall to Ely Haugh, the fishing-ground is very sweetly variegated. The rivulet, still retaining its bold character and lofty banks, is beautifully diversified into pool and stream, and is for the most part overhung by wood to an extent that adds much interest to the sport. In these shady holes the heaviest fish are sure to lie ; and thus the accompaniment of wood, whilst it gives beauty to the scene, has an additional charm which the angler only can appreciate. Enlarged by the reception of various tributary streams during its progress, the river now at times divides itself into branches—thus forming wooded islands, which add much to its natural beauty. In that portion of the river which approaches the estate of Ely Haugh, there occurs one of these, the features of which are very striking and singular. The banks of the Coquet are here lofty, and on the north side very steep and finely wooded. The south bank is less precipitous and less covered with forest ; but the immediate margin of the current is clothed with natural wood of the minor sort, intermixed with lofty trees. Thus, at this part of the stream occurs an island of considerable length, covered with tall trees of great height, and in appear-

ance of immense age, being clad with moss. The limbs of these trees are so extended that they often meet the branches of those that cover the river's banks, which thus runs for some distance under a natural umbrageous arch, almost impervious to the sunbeams. For some reason or other, the rocks—with which, at this singular spot, the stream is filled—are also clad with moss of a dark colour, which, joined to the complete seclusion of the place, a peculiar hollow echo, and the dim light in which, even at mid-day, the whole is seen, strikes the mind with an irresistible feeling of awe, much akin to that which is felt in traversing the aisles of a cathedral. The whole isle seems fitted for some dark Druidical rite; and few can go there alone without some sensation of that religious gloom which such a scene may be supposed to excite. It is certain that few anglers like to linger there. The moss, which clothes the whole bed of the river, is at variance with the habits of the trout; and such is the dreariness of the place, and the sad echo of the dark waters, that a sense of relief is felt when it is passed.

From this spot down to Felton, where the stream is again bridged, the Coquet flows through a pretty and richly-cultivated country, well adorned with timber; until, after passing the richly-wooded banks of Acklington, the scene, as Warkworth is approached, changes for the last time. The cliffs here again become bold and lofty, and the river becomes again confined within

walls of continuous rock, crowned with wood, and lofty as well as precipitous. On the north bank an irregular foot-path is formed along the cliffs; and here is scooped that cell which Dr Percy has immortalised in his *Hermit of Warkworth*. On a lofty and steep hill at the end of these cliffs, round which the river bends, stands the lofty keep of the old baronial fortress of Warkworth; and in the valley below it, close by the river, the ancient tower of Warkworth. To the Bridge of Warkworth the tide rises; and, after a short run through level country, the Coquet is mingled with the ocean.

There are certainly few rivers so finely adapted as is the Coquet for all the varieties of trout-fishing in all modes and seasons. In its waters the fly-fisher, the troller with a minnow, the bait-angler—whether with worm or with salmon-roe—and the shade-fisher—whether his line be the natural fly, the brandling, or the loaded minnow—are sure of each obtaining plenty of that sport which he prefers. For all these various modes of angling the scenery of this excellent stream presents the proper features in high perfection. From the source of the river down to the turn below Crag-end, the fly-fisher, the worm-fisher, and the troller with the roving minnow, may find the water best suited to them; whilst in the wooded streams and stony pools from Pepper Haugh down to Warkworth, shade-fishing in all its modifications may be successfully pursued. The river Coquet is emphatically and peculiarly a

trout-stream. In this it resembles the rivers of Scotland, and differs from those in England. Farther southwards—in the Tyne, the Wear, the Tees, the Wharf, and the other rivers of Yorkshire—are to be found, together with the river-trout, the roach, the greyling, the dace, the pike, the chub, the bream, the perch, and the gudgeon. Within a few years the gudgeon has, unhappily, been introduced into the Coquet. We say “unhappily,” because this fish is a great devourer of the spawn both of the trout and salmon. Up to a recent period, however, the fish in the Coquet were limited to the trout, the salmon-trout, or sea-trout, the salmon occasionally, the eel, and the minnow. The absence of weeds, sand, and mud, render it unsuited to the pike, the dace, the roach, or the perch ; nor do we think the gudgeon can ever become plentiful. For the greyling, which has all the habits of the trout, it might seem to be well adapted ; but that fish is not an inhabitant of its streams. The eel of the Coquet, of a fine brown and white species, is exquisite as food ; and being plentiful throughout the whole of its waters, affords fine sport to him who can wield the *leister* or eel-spear. The salmon-trout is also exceedingly plentiful, and rises at the ordinary trout-fly very ordinarily, especially at the red hackle. In the tide-way between Warkworth and the German Ocean, the whitling is also to be found in the autumn months, and, if angled for with a small salmon-fly, affords capital diversion in a very moderate

space of water. Such is the river Coquet, now well known as one of the very finest trout-streams that England can boast. It is impossible, though the net and the torch and leister have done much mischief, by any method of fair angling to deprive it of its stores ; and the angler who once visits it must be a stoic indeed if he is not tempted to revisit its beautiful waters. Amongst the Northumbrian "brethren of the angle" it has obtained somehow or other the reputation of uncertainty, or of being what is technically termed "a petted water." This may be the case. We have only to assure those who wish to visit it and make the trial, that perseverance there will sooner or later meet with its well-earned reward—success.

The songs, which are now for the first time collected into a volume, undoubtedly owe the favour which they have already met with, and the attention which they have obtained amongst lovers of poesy generally, to the inspiration of the beautiful and heart-stirring scenes of the Coquet. If they have any merit, that merit is due to the scenery amid which they were conceived. In so far as they embody vivid and graphic description of that which is, and breathe the pure spirit which such scenes must inspire in all minds and hearts capable of feeling, they are good and poetical—but no further. Amidst the varied beauties of the exquisite valleys which they describe were they first conceived ; and if they are redolent of the pure air and sparkling waters of the river of their birth, it is perhaps to be

ascribed as much to the circumstances under which they were composed as to the design of those who composed them. Certain it is they were struck out amid the inspiration of the moment, and after the excitement of many and many happy days, not ill-spent it is hoped, amid the surely innocent fascination of pursuits as alluring as they are healthful and manly. This is their brief history ; and as such they are now thrown upon the wide waters of literature—their editor not despairing that nature in her simplest dress may win attention, and live in the world's ear when more ambitious compositions are forgotten in oblivion. The pursuit of the angler carries a moral with it, which may be useful to those to whom angling may have small charms and little of fascination. It is best, perhaps, expressed in the following sonnet, which, though often reprinted, the reader may not object to see repeated here, where it is peculiarly in place. If it be correct, the statesman and the hero may owe their success to circumstances perhaps as little dignified as those which tend upon the angler's sport ; nor may they find it easy to prove their more imposing occupations to be more conducive than his to the innocence of those who are immersed in them, or to the happiness of that world by which they are rated so highly.

“Go, take thine angle, and with practised line,
Light as the gossamer, the current sweep ;
And if thou failest in the calm, still deep,
In the rough eddy may a prize be thine.

Say thou'rt unlucky where the sunbeams shine;
 Beneath the shadow, where the waters creep,
 Perchance the monarch of the brook shall leap—
For fate is ever better than design.
Still persevere; the giddiest breeze that blows
 For thee may blow, with fame and fortune rife.
Be prosperous; and what reck if it arose
 Out of some pebble with the stream at strife,
Or that the light wind dallied with the boughs?
 Thou art successful. Such is human life !”

The editor has only to add, that, having been favoured with access to the MSS. of Mr Doubleday and Mr Robert White, both for many years intimate friends of Mr Roxby, and one of them his coadjutor in the composition of the following Lyrics, he has extracted from them such notices as are appended.

THE
COQUET-DALE FISHING SONGS.

THE FISHER'S GARLAND.

"If, as philosophers are sometimes pleased to assert, there be "a universal fitness of things," it certainly seems to accord with that fitness that I should give some account of the originator and joint author of the following productions, and of the origin of my acquaintance with him, before adverting to the more immediate circumstances connected with that authorship. I do it with the more alacrity, because it is a tale that may be briefly told. I have had from my earliest youth a passion for the craft of angling, and more especially for that department of it which is comprehended under the term 'fly-fishing.' By this term I would be understood as meaning the art of angling with artificial flies. Fishing with the natural fly neither I nor my friend ever practised; and I think it is more properly included under the designation of 'shade-fishing.' Be that as it may, however, artificial-fly fishing was the art which led to my being,

whilst yet a boy, acquainted with the late Robert Roxby. I was introduced to him in the early part of the year 1804, or in the latter months of the year 1803. The precise date I cannot determine. My introducer was the late Mr John Coward, formerly of Alnwick, who happened at that time to be employed by my father, and who was himself a keen and experienced votary of 'the gentle craft.' He had then known Roxby for many years, and had enjoyed with him many a 'fishing bout,' principally in the river Reed, in the vicinity of which my future friend was born and nurtured. At the period of my introduction to him, Mr Roxby was about thirty-five years of age. He could, of course, only see in me a bashful, odd, and nervous lad, but one who was a most ardent votary of the sport which he so loved. His good-nature prompted him to give me some lessons in the science of dressing artificial flies, in which he was indifferently skilled; and this, in time, ripened first into intimacy, and then into friendship. My companion, no doubt, soon began to discover that we had tastes and sympathies in common, other than the mere love of piscatory sport. He found that, to me, a large portion of the charm resided in the ever-varying picturesque of the river scenery, amidst which the sport of fly-fishing is pursued; and this was especially the case with himself. A canal or a fish-pond, though stored with finny fry, would have been valueless to him, to whom 'rocks and streams' were a constant subject for enthusiasm. In short, 'the burn stealing under the lang yellow broom' had a spell for both, quite independent of its being a nursery for trout.

Here was another source of sympathy ; and to this a third was soon added—the love of poetry, and especially of lyrical poetry, common to us both. In verse it happened, luckily for myself, that I was precociously well read. Burns and Shakspeare, as well as Pope and Prior, I had almost by heart ; and this my piscatory mentor was not slow in evolving. And when he found, further, that even then I had essayed to ‘build the lofty rhyme,’ and, amongst other feats, had translated divers odes of Horace into doggrel stanzas, the tie between us was all but complete.

“It may easily be supposed that this companionship was not long in producing its fruits. I was soon fired by the descriptions which I now constantly heard of ‘the glorious fishing’ in the Coquet, the Reed, or the Kale ; and in the year 1805, I first threw a fly in the Coquet, about which I had heard so much. Nor were these descriptions overcharged. When I first knew the river, I am firmly of belief that few streams in England, or even in Scotland, could possibly exceed the Coquet in their qualities as trout-streams. The water was, in fact, full of fish from the source to the ocean—

‘From Harden’s bleak fell to the deep-rolling main.’

The nation was then comparatively at ease, and the population of this portion of Northumberland were peculiarly thriving. The net, the torch, the night-line, and the leister, were consequently rarely then resorted to, and never from necessity ; and, excepting sometimes by one or two Catholic families, to whom, in Lent, fish were indispensable, I believe few trout

were abstracted from the streams of the Coquet unless by what is called 'fair fishing.' In this my first essay on the waters of the far-famed Coquet, my newly found friend did not, as it happened, accompany me. I had with me, however, a comrade quite as experienced, and almost as skilful ; and, tyro as I was, our success was quite sufficient to excite me to renewed enterprise. It was not until the year 1807 that I first accompanied the originator of 'The Coquet-Dale Garlands' to the banks of his favourite stream, and first saw him, with a wonder pardonable in youth, 'thraw a flee' with that extraordinary grace and dexterity which were almost peculiar to him. It was an era in the life of a fly-fisher !

"This expedition, I need not say, soon became the parent of many more ; but of these, numberless 'creels,' heavily laden with trout, were for some time the only fruits. We talked poetically during the intervals of our sport, it is true, and praised with enthusiasm the beauties of our favourite river ; but

'To make her streams and burnies shine
 up with the best,'

was as yet an idea unapproachable, as it seemed, by either. In this early prosaic desert there appeared, indeed, an *oasis* in 1809, when an accidental copy of verses, addressed by Roxby to his early friend, the late Matthew Forster, of Broomyholme, was at length drawn out into a ballad of three parts. But 'to mak' a sang' seemed still a feat not to be attempted. In the composition of this poem, if such 'hamely wrestlin' jingle'

may be allowed the name, I, though little more than a schoolboy, was consulted from first to last, and took some small share; and I have often wondered since that this trial of his lyrical strength, imperfect as it was, had not led the writer of 'The Lay of the Reedwater Minstrel' sooner to other attempts; yet, at this distance of time, I cannot be sure that some of my own whimsies may not be accountable for the delay. If they be so, it happened after this fashion. Amongst other peculiarities common to 'the Bard,' as he now began to be sportively termed by his friends, and to myself, was a taste for the ancient expressive airs of Scotland and Ireland. With me, indeed, it amounted to a passion; and with him, I think, it was not much less. In both it was felt in childhood. He used to assert that he never knew the time when such airs as 'Auld Lang Syne,' 'Low down i' the Broom,' or 'The Howes o' Cromdale,' especially if sung by a clear female voice, did not throw him into ecstasies; and, for myself, I may say that, at seven years of age, those Irish airs, which about that period O'Keefe made popular by his 'Poor Soldier'—such as 'A Rose-tree full in bearing;' and 'Here, Kate, take this tobacco-box,'—'wrapt me in an Elysium,' that after-times have never surpassed. This taste, of course, led to collateral pursuits. I was pretty soon master of a four-keyed German flute, and a set of *Macgibbon's Melodies of Scotland*; and, not content with practice, I also indulged in theory, and had at length constructed for myself a very laudable system of the 'Metaphysics' of musical expression, as *Blackwood's Magazine* in after-time bore witness. To inoculate the author of 'The

Reedwater Minstrel' with a metaphysical theory was a hopeless quest ; but I unluckily persuaded him and myself, that, to write a song, in the true lyrical sense of that much abused word, was the most difficult of all human enterprises ; and this persuasion, I am inclined to fancy, was not without its effect upon the muse. Thus, therefore, though music, from first to last, never failed to enliven the evenings of our fishing expeditions, and though we afterwards added the exquisite playing of our mutual friend, Mr Robert Plummer, to whom I became only a very humble 'second flute,' yet this theory of the almost impossibility of song-writing so hung about us, that, although during the interval we both rhymed not a little, many years elapsed before a fishing-song was even thought of. For the melancholy ditties which are inserted in old Isaac Walton's otherwise excellent piscatory pastoral, Roxby had no relish, and I had just as little. To his ear they sounded like some modern air, mawkish and meaningless, played after one of his favourite, ancient, impassioned melodies of Scotland or Ireland. When, therefore, at length, in spite of that unlucky theory, by means of which he was firmly impressed with the notion that, of a perfect song, every line, and indeed every word, must exactly accord with the expression of each musical phrase of the melody to which it is written—when, therefore, at last, in spite of this Draconic theory, he adventured upon a fishing-song, we may safely conclude that he took no hint from any preceding composition, for none existed (as far as we knew) for which he had one iota of poetical respect.

"It was in the year 1821 that the first *Fisher's Garland* was written, and, as I remember the circumstances, they were these.—The spring of 1821 proved very uncertain and rough, even for the rude climate of Northumberland. Seduced, however, by the prevalence for some few days of westerly and south-westerly winds, with some sunshine, and a somewhat mild temperature of the air, we had, on the 28th of March, ventured over to the Coquet, to take our chance for a day's fly-fishing. On our arrival at Weldon Bridge in the evening, we fell in with Matthew Ferguson, an experienced angler, then resident within a short distance of our quarters, and he agreed to join us next day, let the weather be what it might. Matthew faithfully 'kept tryst;' and, as is often the case with precarious ventures, our day's sport turned out favourably, far beyond any anticipations which we either indulged or had a right to indulge. The day proved to be a rude, boisterous, and changeable one in the extreme. The wind blew from the west all through, but in heavy gusts, with frequent lulls, most of the blasts being accompanied with flying showers of sleet, or even snow. As the clouds passed, however, we had intervals of bright sunshine, under which the half-frozen flakes that stuck to our jackets absolutely glittered. The result of the day's work was a dish of trout, including three salmon-trout, such as for weight I have never seen equalled either before or since.

"It will be readily conceived that, after a day's sport like this, those concerned returned home highly pleased

with the result. This little excitement led to other and to better consequences. In a few days after our return home, I received a note from my companion, begging me to call at his lodgings, as he had something 'to show me.' On calling, I had the satisfaction to find, fairly down upon paper, the first three stanzas of the first song of this series. I could not but perceive that the lines had that peculiar freshness of spirit and natural simplicity which are best suited to such a subject; and I urged the author to complete a work so auspiciously begun. The answer was, that, like Dominie Sampson, he was fairly 'stickit,' and that, if finished they were to be, I must do it. The world has the result before it. Its first publication was, I believe, mainly owing, however, to the praises of an old and mutual friend, the celebrated artist Bewick, who was himself a keen fisher, and to whom 'the Bard' luckily showed the effusion. With the song the artist was so mightily taken that he insisted on its publication, and, by way of furthering a good work, made a loan of one of his own admirable vignettes to adorn it. Thus far all seemed to go on prosperously: but

'The best-laid schemes of mice and men
Gang aft agley!'

The author of 'The Lay of the Reedwater Minstrel' had certainly dipped his fingers in printer's ink; but of typography and typographers he knew nothing. Instead, therefore, of getting his 'garland' struck off by the best pressman and the best press that Newcastle could produce, he trusted the whole to a journeyman

printer of whom he happened to know something ; and a precious affair the two made of it. The song itself was, indeed, passably printed upon a broadsheet of middling paper ; but at the head stood something that resembled a blot rather than a tail-piece, much to the discomposure of the nerves of the artist, who had no notion of seeing his blocks handled after this fashion, and who, I believe, did not for a long time forgive the poet this piece of thoughtlessness. In spite of this mishap, however, the song soon became popular with the admirers of this species of composition, and was, some few years after, reprinted as part of the series for the late Mr Emerson Charnley, the bookseller, at the press of Messrs Thomas and James Hodgson, Newcastle, through which all the earlier works of Bewick passed.

"This song had the advantage, which most of the others also had, of being written expressly for the tune to which it is sung, and to which it is adapted. As a sprightly air, 'The Miller o' Dron' was one of the prime favourites of the author ; and the spirit of the song, to a great extent, accords with it. The chorus was added by me, and readily adopted, maugre certain criticisms, to which I never could attach much weight. If a song, as is the case with this garland, be manifestly the expression of the feelings of more than one person, why should not a chorus, if a good one, add to the general effect ? Of the extreme difficulty of hitting upon a good chorus I am well aware ; but in such quests men must take their chance."—*Mr Double-day's MSS.*

Thus far Mr Doubleday. The following extract shows that Mr White, a competent judge of this species of poetry, estimates the song very highly:—

“The most humorous and pleasing of these lyrics, and those also most pregnant with the spirit of poetry, will be found in the measures usually called short. Where the long measure has been adopted, save in one instance, the lines run somewhat heavily. Mr Roxby’s verse bears some resemblance to the manner in which his conversation generally flowed; for some of his best thoughts were uttered in few words, his genius being more essentially lyrical than eloquent. We are therefore inclined to look upon these effusions, keeping in the background the assistance the author derived in composing them, as the memorials of a mind amply endowed with poetic fancy and feeling. Hence it follows, that, if Redesdale can boast of the chaplet awarded to her in the ‘Lay,’ the same hand has culled a garland for her sister, Coquet-dale, the leaves and flowers of which will not speedily fade.

“A sweet lightness runs through this lyric, which forms a most appropriate commencement to the series, the versification being in the author’s best manner. ‘The coaly Tyne,’ in stanza second, is Milton’s expression in the ‘Vacation Exercise,’ written by that great poet in his nineteenth year.”—*Mr White’s MSS.*

The Fisher's Garland.

TUNE—"The Miller o' Dron."

AULD Nature now revivèd seems,
Cauld winter's blasts are fled ;
And freely flow the sunny streams
O'er Coquet's pebbly bed.
The mellow thrush, frae Dews-hill wood,
Proclaims the dawn of day,
And to the Coquet's crystal flood
The fisher wends his way.

CHORUS.

Then luck be to the angler lads,
Luck to the rod and line ;
Wi' morn's first beam we'll wade the stream,
The night we'll wet wi' wine.

Nae mair we'll fish the coaly Tyne,
Nae mair the oozy Team ;
Nae mair we'll try the sedgy Pont,
Or Derwent's woody stream ;
But we'll awa' to Coquet-side,
For Coquet bangs them a' ;
Whose winding streams sae sweetly glide
By Brinkburn's bonny ha'.

Then luck, &c.

And we'll prepare our limber gads,
Lang lines, and braw brass wheels ;
We'll wile the trouties frae their hauds,
And soon fill a' our creels :
We'll catch them here, we'll catch them there,
Wi' mennim, bait, an' flee ;
We'll thousands kill, wi' hook and hair,
'Tween Thirlmoor and the sea.

Then luck, &c.

At Weldon Brig there's wale o' wine,
If ye hae coin i' pocket ;
If ye can thraw a heckle fine,
There's wale o' trouts i' Coquet.
And we will quaff the bluid-red wine,
Till Weldon's wa's shall reel ;
We'll drink success to hook and line,
And a' wha bear the creel.

Then luck, &c.

If ony dolt, our song that hears,
Abuse the rod and fly,
May he, to pay him for his jeers,
"Have other fish to fry!"
If ony witling dare to lash
The lads wha make the cast,
May he, to pay him for his clash,
Dance in a line at last!

Then luck, &c.

And O! in all their angling bouts,
On Coquet, Tyne, or Reed,
Whether for maidens or for trouts,
May angler's still succeed!
By Pont or Coquet, Tyne or Team,
In sunshine or in rain,
May fisher ne'er put foot in stream,
Or hand in purse, in vain!

Then luck, &c.

The sun is on the mountain side,
The daisy on the sod,
The river sparkles in his pride,
Then fishers take the rod.
Since summer beams begin to dart,
To streamy Weldon post,
And he shall have the lightest heart,
Whose creel shall weigh the most.

[CHORUS.]

CHORUS.

Then luck be to the angler lads,
Luck to the rod and line ;
Wi' morn's first beam we'll wade the stream,
The night we'll wet wi' wine.

NEWCASTLE, 5th April 1821.

COQUET-SIDE, &c.

"THIS song was originally written to be sung to the old Scottish air of 'The Hows o' Glenorchie,' and was for some years so sung. I have always considered it, however, much better suited to that old Irish air to which Moore has married his exquisite lyric, 'They may rail at this life.' It is an air of reckless enjoyingness, (if I may be allowed such a term ;) and enjoyingness is the prevailing character of this six-stanza'd sketch of a two days' expedition.—'Meô periculo' therefore I, after some consultation, ventured to substitute the Irish tune for the Scottish one. I have frequently heard the song sung to both, and the result confirms my first impressions.

"The occasion of this Garland being commenced was the following :—My friend and I, to vary the scene a little from the lower part of the river, had gone up to Rothbury, from which, next morning, he was to fish down to Weldon Bridge, whilst I proceeded upwards, as far as Sharperton, to fish back again to Rothbury, covenanting to follow next day down to Weldon Bridge. Our success was chequered and various. It was about the middle of the month of May, with a clear day and clear water, and a wind from the south-east. In the

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wild and rough water, which characterises much of the stream between Rothbury and Weldon, little was done; whilst, in the streams that alternate with fine pools between Sharperton and Hepple Tower, I outwent all rivalry. Commencing a little before ten o'clock at Sharperton, and passing Halystane, (still venerated as the scene of the miraculous labours of St Paulinus,) I ended, a little after two, below Hepple, and reached Rothbury about four o'clock with a full pannier. I brought with me exactly one hundred and three trout of all sizes, none being very large; but I must have captured many more, as, during the last hour, I put the smaller fry back into the water, and only retained such as caused me to take two out in order to get one more into my creel. The next day totally turned the tables. We had a gentle breeze from the west, with alternate clouds and gleams of sultry heat. I had now to fish over that rough water which characterises the Coquet betwixt Rothbury and Crag-end; and, after a ducking, which I got from falling in the middle of a deep stream where I had hooked a heavy trout, I arrived at Weldon Mill with not more than two dozen fish to show for my day's work; whilst my companion, who was famed for his management of clear water, had a large pannier two-thirds full. Such readers as are acquainted with the Coquet will perceive the Garland, No. II., which was commenced soon after, is a sort of poetical exaggeration of the proceedings of these two eventful days. With the whole varied scenery of this beautiful river—'from Thirlmoor to the sea'—the Bard was well acquainted; and of that, to the fly-fisher,

fine sweep of water, which winds its course over beds of gravel from the vicinity of Harbottle down to the turn which the river takes before it reaches Hepple, he was very fond. He had accordingly fished it over in imagination ; and the fruit of the excitement was the commencement of another Garland, of which the last three stanzas are mine. It was, I think, first printed on a broadsheet by Messrs Hodgson, and afterwards reprinted for our worthy and mutual friend, Mr Charnley, as part of the series of 'Fishing Garlands,' to which his name is appended.

"Whether the circumstances under which it was written may have had a peculiar charm for me, I cannot say ; but I have always deemed this second song superior to the first, and, in fact, one of the best of the series. In this commendatory criticism I believe vocalists, at all events, will be inclined to bear me out. It goes trippingly to the voice of the singer, and the words tally with the tune throughout—a great virtue in a song."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

This opinion, it will be seen, does not exactly accord with that of Mr White. And

"Who shall decide when doctors disagree?"—

"Another lyric of considerable merit. Though not equal to the first, a gentle vein of gaiety sparkles through it. The author appears to have bestowed more labour on this piece than usual—not, however, with the most beneficial effect."—*Mr White's MSS.*

Coquet-Side, &c.

TUNE—"They may rail at this life."

THE lambs they are feeding on lonely Shilmore,
 And the breezes blow softly o'er dark Simondside ;
 The birds they are lilting in ev'ry green bower,
 And the streams of the Coquet now merrily glide.
 The primrose is blooming at Halystane Well,
 And the bud's on the saugh, and the bonny birk tree ;
 The moorcocks are calling round Harbottle Fell,
 And the snaw-wreaths are gane frae the Cheviot so hie.

The mist's on the mountain, the dew's on the spray,
 And the lassie has kilted her coats to the knee ;
 The shepherd he's whistling o'er Barraburn brae,
 And the sunbeams are glintin far over the sea ;
 Then we'll off to the Coquet, with hook, hair, and heckle,
 With our neat taper gads, and our well-belted creels,
 And far from the bustle and din o' Newcastle,
 Begin the campaign at the streams o' Linn-shiels.

The "Nimrod" may brag of his horns and his hounds,
And of louping o'er hedges and ditches may rave ;
But what's all their clamour, their rides, and their rounds,
Compar'd with the murmur of Coquet's clear wave ?
And "Ramrod" may crack of his pointer so staunch,
And may tramp till he's weary o'er stubble and lea ;
But what's all the fun of the dog and the gun,
Compar'd with the "Lang-rod," and thrawing the flee ?

More big of our conquests than great Alexander,
We'll rise to our sport with the morning's first beam ;
Our creels shall grow heavier as onward we wander,
And levy large tribute from pool and from stream.
We'll plunder the deeps, and the shallows we'll tax well,
Till Sharperton, Hepple, and Thropton are past ;
We'll halt near the Thrum for a dinner with Maxwell,
But land at our old home of Weldon at last.

Now Crag-end is past, and now Brinkburn is nearest,
Now the green braes of Tod-stead, the pride of the vale,
Then, hey ! for fam'd Weldon, to anglers the dearest,
Old Weldon, whose cellars and streams never fail ;
There we'll talk of our triumphs, and boast of our slaughter,
How "we hook'd him, and play'd him, and kill'd him so fine ;"
And the battles, so gloriously finish'd in water,
Again and again we'll fight over in wine.

Here's good luck to the gad, and success to each friend on't ;
If e'er pray'r of mine can have interest above,
May they run their line smoothly, nor soon see an end on't,
And their course be as clear as the streams that they love !
May the current of life still spread glitt'ring before them,
And their joys ever rise as the season draws nigh ;
And if e'er—as 'twill happen—misfortune comes o'er them,
Oh ! still may her dart fall as light as their fly !

NEWCASTLE, *May* 1822.

THE AULD FISHER'S WELCOME TO COQUET-SIDE.

“ THIS song was really, I believe, addressed to a very old friend of the author, and an experienced and very skilful fly-fisher—the late Mr Thomas Snowball, formerly of Shotley Bridge, but for the greater portion of his life resident in Newcastle, where he died many years ago. He had accompanied Mr Roxby upon more than one excursion to the river Coquet in earlier times. The memory of pleasures past is said to be sometimes sweeter than the pleasures themselves ; and ‘ The Auld Fisher’s Welcome ’ was intended to be a sort of commemoration of a fishing bout in which Mr Snowball took part, and which had occurred some years before. It took place at Hepple, when the farm of that name was in the occupation of the late Mr Wilson, whose guests the anglers were. That Mr Snowball was an accomplished angler with the artificial fly I can myself bear testimony, having more than once met him when fishing the river Coquet, and having witnessed his success under what seemed to me rather adverse circumstances. The feats performed at Hepple on the occasion alluded to were, I believe, somewhat extraordinary even then, when fish were much more plentiful than they have

been of late. Seventeen dozen of trout were brought home, the produce of only six or seven hours' labour ; nor were they away from the house much more than a mile either up or down the river. This was in the month of April, in a peculiarly dry and fine spring ; and another peculiarity was, that neither Mr Roxby nor his friend Snowball used any flies other than those called by north country anglers, 'red' and 'black hackles.' It was altogether a memorable as well as a singular affair, and ended in a jollification, in the course of which their host, who had, it seems, a taste for antiquities, made a bowl of punch in a Roman urn which had been turned up by the plough some time before upon the farm, and, instead of a glass, produced a 'calix' or 'patera' of some mixed metal, found near the same spot, which they persuaded themselves might have been used by the Emperor Severus, or some other great potentate, for a similar purpose, though not with the same beverage.

"That this effusion possesses merit, I may assume, perhaps, without the imputation of arrogance, after stating that it was printed by my accomplished and esteemed friend, the late Allan Cunningham, himself an admirable lyric poet, in his collection of *The Songs of Scotland*. Mr Cunningham, in his reprint, omitted the chorus, a sort of addition to which he had a decided, but, I venture to think, not very well-founded dislike. To this song I contributed the last three verses, and also the chorus, which, however questionable in taste, I have always felt to answer in singing when a social table is the scene. As a composition,

the whole is perhaps more characteristic than poetical."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"In this song the author holds out the right hand of fellowship to his friend, asking the favour of his company once more to the braes of the Coquet. The topic is discussed fairly, and with much spirit, whilst the hand of the poet in several lines is very evident."—*Mr White's MSS.*

The Auld Fisher's Welcome to Coquet-Side.

TUNE—"Auld Lang Syne."

WE twa hae fished the Kale sae clear,
 An' streams o' mossy Reed,
 We've tried the Wansbeck an' the Wear,
 The Teviot an' the Tweed ;
 An' we will try them ance again
 When summer suns are fine,
 An' we'll thraw the flee thegither yet,
 For the days o' lang syne.

CHORUS.

For gie's a drappie till our cheek,
 Our ain gad in our han' ;
 The tackle tough, the heckle rough,
 An' match us yet wha can !

'Tis mony years sin' first we met
On Coquet's bonny braes,
An' mony a brither fisher's gane,
An' clad in his last claes ;
An' we maun follow wi' the lave,
Grim Death he heuks us a',
But we'll hae anither fishing bout
Afore we're taen awa'.

For gie's, &c.

For we are hale an' hearty baith,
Tho' frosty are our pows,
We still can guide our fishing graith,
An' climb the dykes and knowes ;
We'll mount our creels an' grip our gads,
An' thraw a sweeping line,
An' we'll hae a plash amang the lads,
For the days o' lang syne.

For gie's, &c.

Tho' Cheviot's top be frosty still,
He's green belaw the knee,
Sae don your plaid an' tak your gad,
An' gang awa wi' me.
Come busk your flees, my auld compeer,
We're fidgin a' fu' fain ;
We've fish'd the Coquet mony a year,
An we'll fish her owre again.

For gie's, &c.

An' hameward when we toddle back,
An' night begins to fa',
When ilka chiel maun tell his crack,
We'll crack aboon them a'—
When jugs are toom'd an' coggies wet,
I'll lay my loof in thine ;
We've shown we're guid at water yet,
An' we're little warse at wine.

For gie's, &c.

We'll crack how mony a creel we've fill'd,
How mony a line we've flung,
How mony a ged an' sawmon kill'd
In days when we were young ;
We'll gar the callants a' look blue,
An' sing anither tune ;
They're bleezing aye o' what they'll do ;
We'll tell them what we've dune.

CHORUS.

For gie's a drappie till our cheek,
Our ain gad in our han' ;
The tackle tough, the heckle rough,
An' match us yet wha can !

NEWCASTLE, *March* 1824.

THE AULD FISHER'S FAREWEEL.

"THE 'Fareweel to Coquet' arose, pertinently enough, out of a couple of days of piscatory ill-luck. The author and I, accompanied, as I remember it, by our mutual friend, Mr Robert Plummer, had gone over, rather late in the fly-fishing season, to Weldon Bridge. For some especial reason or other, which I have now forgotten, we particularly wished to bring home a creditable assortment of trout ; but in this, for once, fortune was resolved to disappoint us. Both weather and water were remarkably fine—that is to say, clear ; but in other respects, the aspect of affairs was by no means such as to lead us to anticipate the want of sport which we experienced. Whether it was that the fish had at this moment become fairly gorged with the natural fly, which was now very plentiful, I cannot pretend to say ; but the result was, that two days of really laborious fishing produced very meagre returns. Poets are generally of the sanguine temperament, and bear disappointment badly ; so it was here. Our friend was inclined to lay the whole blame upon the river. Coquet, he owned, was, past a doubt, once a trout-stream 'of the first water ;' but now, he insisted upon it, she was so 'be-netted' and 'be-night-lined,'

and 'be-leistered' and 'be-limed'—in short, so be-devilled, as not to be worth an angler's trouble! To Coquet he was accordingly prepared now to bid adieu! But this, we told him, we might possibly believe when we saw the parting words in verse, but certainly not until then. It seems that this idea had dwelt in the breast of the disappointed man; for although he soon discovered that Coquet was, in fisher's phrase, 'a petted water'—that is to say, a river of which the inhabitants are at times unaccountably and capriciously shy—yet, to my agreeable surprise, he, many months after, laid before me the commencing stanzas of the 'Fareweel.' I could not but be forcibly struck with the simple pathos of the lines, and earnestly urged their completion by him who had begun so well; but was met by the usual objection—'He could begin, but he couldna bring her tull a focus!'—as if it followed as a matter of course that I should reverse the order of this arrangement. There was no help for it, however; and therefore, having suggested a slight alteration in the third stanza, which was adopted, I, with much fear and trembling, added the three concluding stanzas, nearly as they stand in the printed song.

"I believe universal opinion runs in favour of the 'Fareweel to Coquet' as the best of the entire series, and in that judgment I willingly acquiesce. It always seemed to me to be the most natural and equable in style; and it embodies a simple pathos that never fails of its effect upon the heart. The right chord is struck from the beginning, and that must be a callous soul that fails to respond. Another good quality it

has, which all songs do not possess ; and that is, it 'sings' exceedingly well. I may perhaps be allowed to mention, that Mr Roxby's first intention was to have had it sung to the well-known Scotch air of 'John Anderson, my Joe ;' but against this I protested from the first. The difficulty was to find a tune more suitable ; and it was not until after many consultations that the Irish melody of 'Grammachree' was adopted. It is, no doubt, somewhat too stately in its flow for words so simple, but still it is probably the best that could be found. Those who have had the luck to hear it sung to this air by Mr Edward Train, the now well-known painter of landscape, who, in his search after the picturesque, sometimes joined our fishing parties, will, I know, be of this opinion."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"This is probably the finest and most beautiful of the whole series, bearing the impress of the author's heart on every stanza. I look upon it as a gem of the purest water, and of itself almost sufficient to preserve the writer's name from oblivion. In its earnestness lies its great charm. The words 'dimly hear,' in the latter part of the third stanza, may not be critically correct, but poetically they are so ; and whoever carps at the expression, I shall listen to him patiently, if he will first pen a lyric superior to the following."—*Mr White's MSS.*

The Auld Fisher's Fareweel to Coquet.

TUNE—"Grammachree."

COME bring to me my limber gad
 I've fish'd wi' mony a year,
 An' let me hae my weel-worn creel,
 An' a' my fishing gear ;
 The sun-beams glint on Linden-Ha',
 The breeze comes frae the west,
 An' lovely looks the gowden morn
 On th' streams that I like best.

I've thrawn the flee thae sixty year,
 Ay, sixty year and mair,
 An' mony a speckled troutie kill'd
 Wi' heckle, heuk, an' hair ;
 An' now I'm auld an' feeble grown,
 My locks are like the snaw ;
 But I'll gang again to Coquet-side,
 An' tak' a fareweel thraw.

O Coquet ! in my youthfu' days
Thy river sweetly ran,
An' sweetly down thy woody braes
The bonnie birdies sang ;
But streams may rin, an' birds may sing,
Sma' joy they bring to me,
The blithesome strains I dimly hear,
The streams I dimly see.

But, ance again, the weel-kenn'd sounds
My minutes shall beguile,
An' glistening in the airy sun
I'll see thy waters smile :
An' sorrow shall forget his sigh,
An' age forget his pain,
An' ance mair, by sweet Coquet-side,
My heart be young again.

^ Ance mair I'll touch, wi' gleesome foot,
Thy waters clear and cold ;
Ance mair I'll cheat the gleg-e'd trout,
An' wile him frae his hold ;
Ance mair, at Weldon's frien'ly door,
I'll wind my tackle up,
An' drink "Success to Coquet-side,"
Tho' a tear fa' in the cup.

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An' then fareweel !—dear Coquet-side !
Aye gaily may thou rin,
An' lead thy waters sparkling on,
An' dash frae linn to linn ;
Blithe be the music o' thy streams
An' banks, thro' afterdays,
An' blithe be every fisher's heart
Shall ever tread thy braes !

NEWCASTLE, *April* 1825.

"THE COQUET FOR EVER!"

"It was one of the peculiarities of the temperament of the late Mr Roxby that it revolted from dwelling long on melancholy themes. Like Dr Johnson, I daresay he never could bear to read *King Lear* a second time. In fact, there was mixed with his blood that perilous 'black drop' that so weighs upon the heart, and so embitters the best days of many men of sensibility. When, therefore, he once let out, in a sort of pet, that the next fishing song (if ever there were one) should be to some 'merry dump,' I began to see that he had a secret grudge against the critics, and that the laudation which they had given the last had cut two ways. No man could better appreciate the pathetic in composition than he; but at bottom he had no lasting love for it, and it was manifest that he had rather this laudation had fallen to the lot of some other of the four. Besides, it carried along with it this awkward implication, that

'nothing in his fishing
Became him like the leaving of 't'

And, to an ardent votary of the angle, this is but a left-handed compliment. Accordingly, when, for the

first time, I perused some of the stanzas of the effusion that stands No. V. in the series, I could not but see that the Muse for once had been possessed by the spirit of contradiction. Neither was the tune to which they were appended of better omen; for, 'whistle' as we might, she came only limpingly. I must plead guilty to the last three verses, which, however, were written *invitâ Minervâ*. The song to me was always unsatisfactory: I do not know that it has more than one passable stanza, if it contains even that. If it does, I leave it to the reader to find out."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"The following is scarcely equal in merit to several of these songs. Its author had not experienced the poetic impulse very strongly when he penned it."—*Mr White's MSS.*

“The Coquet for Eber.”

TUNE—“O whistle an’ I’ll come to you, my Lad.”

I HAVE sung thee, clear Coquet—I’ll sing thee again,
 From Harden’s bleak fell to the deep-rolling main,
 And the Alwine and Wreigh in the Garland shall shine,
 For they mix, lovely river, their waters wi’ thine.
 In my youth I have danced on your bonny green braes ;
 In my old age I think on these dear happy days ;
 In your streams I have angled, and caught the scaled fry,
 And your streams they shall live, tho’ their beds shou’d run dry.

CHORUS—And your streams, &c.

I will sing of the Coquet, the dearest of themes,
 The haunt of the fisher, the first of a’ streams ;
 There’s nane like the Coquet in a’ the king’s land,
 From the cliffs of famed Dover to North Britain’s strand.
 The Coquet for ever, the Coquet for aye !
 The Woodhall and Weldon, and Felton so gay !
 And Brinkburn and Linden, wi’ a’ their sweet pride !
 For they add to the beauties of dear Coquet-side.
 For they, &c.

The fishers for ever, the fishers for aye !
The summer is coming, cold winter's away :
Come, lads, don your jackets, get ready your creels,
Your hooks and your heckles, your gads and their wheels ;
There's nought at Newcastle but tumult and noise,
There's health at the Coquet, and fishing's calm joys ;
And a thousand dear prospects will gladden our e'e
When wading the water and thrawing the flee,
When wading, &c.

The fishers for ever, the fishers for aye !
Oh ! who like the lads o' the creel shall be gay ?
If variety's charming, then fishing's the best,
Each turn and each stream has its different zest.
The gale when it blows, and the sun when he smiles,
And the clouds when they frown, help a fisherman's wiles,
He meets a fresh flower every step of his way—
The fishers for ever, the fishers for aye !
The fishers, &c.

Oh ! how should a fisherman ever be old ?
There's wrinkles in glory, there's wrinkles in gold ;
And Love has his sorrows as well as his joys,
And Power is made up but of glitter and noise ;
Such gewgaws as these let the fisherman scorn—
He's glorious at night, and light-hearted at morn ;
With a cheek full of health, be it hot, be it cold,
Oh ! how should a fisherman ever be old ?
Oh ! how, &c.

The Coquet for ever ! the Coquet for aye !
The Coquet, the king o' the stream an' the brae,
Frae his high mountain throne to his bed in the sea,
Oh ! where shall we find such a river as he ?
Then blessings be on him, and lang may he glide,
The fisherman's home, and the fisherman's pride ;
From Harden's green hill to old Warkworth sae grey—
The Coquet for ever ! the Coquet for aye !

The Coquet, &c.

NEWCASTLE, *April* 1826.

THE FISHER'S CALL.

"THERE is no joint authorship here, as the poetical reader will easily discover without the aid of initials appended. In fact, these verses—for a song it is not—were written for one of Mr Alaric Watts' *Annual Souvenirs*, and were never seen by Mr Roxby until they appeared there. They were composed to suit the market of Cockaigne, and were made part of the Coquet-dale series—not without remonstrance on my part—by my late worthy friend, the late Mr Charnley, in order to fill up the hiatus which (I know not why) occurred at this time in the composition of the Fishers' Garlands. As it is there, there let it stand, for the pure sake of the contrast."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"This song was written by Mr Thomas Doubleday; and it is worthy of a place here, to show the freedom of his hand. It is perhaps deficient in sentiment—its chief merit consisting in happy allusions to a variety of picturesque objects."—*Mr White's MSS.*

The Fisher's Call.

THE thorn is in the bud,
 The palm is in the blossom,
 The primrose, in the shade,
 Unfolds her dewy bosom ;
 Sweet Coquet's purling clear,
 And summer music making ;
 The trout has left his lair,
 Then waken, fishers, waken !

The laverock's in the sky,
 And on the heath the plover,
 The bee upon the thyme,
 The swallow skimming over ;
 The farmer walks the field,
 The seed he's casting steady ;
 The breeze is blowing west,
 Be ready, fishers, ready !

The violet's in her prime,
 And April is the weather ;
 The partridge on the wing,
 The muircock in the heather ;

The sun's upon the pool,
His mornin' radiance wasting,
It's glittering like the gold,
Oh hasten, fishers, hasten !

The Felton lads are up,
They're lookin' to their tackle ;
The sawmon's in the stream,
And killing is the hackle.
If there's a feat to do,
'Tis Weldon boys should do it ;
Then up an' rig your gads,
And to it, fishers, to it !

NEWCASTLE, *April* 1828.

THE OLD FISHER'S CHALLENGE.

“ABOUT the following song there is nothing worthy to be noted, unless it be the circumstance that occasioned its composition. When I first saw Coquet-dale, in 1805, to Newcastle anglers, generally speaking, it was a sort of *terra incognita*. To the Alnwick ‘brethren of the angle,’ who are much nearer, it afforded now and then a day or two of surpassing sport; but, save and except by one or two old, experienced, and choice spirits, it was then very rarely visited from Newcastle for the purpose of fly-fishing, or any other description of angling. Circumstances, however, happened gradually to combine to render the Coquet more and more talked of; and when more talked of, it became as an angling stream more fashionable. As those who went rarely failed to bring home with them, besides trout, very well-coloured and attractive narratives of the piscatory feats performed there, all this boasting begot in time a kind of fame, which, in its turn, became the cause of more boasting, until Coquet and its fishers attained a sort of reputation by no means to be sneezed at. Reputation, they say, invariably begets envy, and envy rivalry. That this was the case, even here, I shall not say; but in

due time a sensation in the piscatory world was created by the receipt of a challenge from North Shields, addressed to the fishing community in general, but to the fly-fishing community of Newcastle in particular, penned in all formality, and enacting deposit of stakes and election of umpires, with all the other paraphernalia of wager, to be decided within a certain month on the river Coquet, by two champions on each side ; the result of which was to be the placing of the piscatory wreath upon the head of Shields or Newcastle, as the event might be. The North Shields champions, on this startling occasion, were the late Lieutenant Guthrie, R.N., and the Rev. Mr Mark, at that time Curate of Tynemouth, two first-rate anglers, and to both of whom the Coquet was perfectly well known. Like many other 'wagers of battle,' this affair, however, eventually ended in smoke. So many preliminaries were to be settled that they never came to a settlement ; and, in the opinion of some, neither party was very anxious to arrive at that stage of the business, inasmuch as every disputed point involved a dinner. I, for my part, being desirous of getting some good out of it, had all along urged Mr Roxby to make a song about it ; but he, in no good humour to have his supremacy thus assailed, always answered, 'Win the wager first, and write the sang after'—a position of which there was no disputing the reasonableness. At last, in a fit of wilfulness, I struck out a rough copy of the lines which now stand as No. VII. in the series, hoping that my old friend would rewrite, alter, or adopt them. This, however, he never did, nor ever would do ; and

in consequence, some time afterwards, a song being wanted, Mr Charnley, to end all controversy, printed them with my initials appended, after they were corrected by myself. Such is their somewhat unsatisfactory history, which reminds one a little of the 'ovation' of Caligula after his expedition to pick shells on the sea-shore."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"This is another from Mr Doubleday's pen. There is more life in it than in the former one ; still it does not surpass those in which Mr Roxby put forth his strength."—*Mr White's MSS.*

The Old Fisher's Challenge.

TUNE—"Boyne Water," (Old Set.)

O ! LET it be in April-tide,
 But one of April's best,
 A mornin' that seems made o' May,
 In dews an' sunshine drest ;
 Frae off the crags o' Simonside,
 Let the fresh breezes blaw,
 And let auld Cheviot's sides be green,
 Albeit his head be snaw.

CHORUS—Frae off the crags, &c.

Let the stream glitter i' the sun ;
 The curl be on the pool,
 The rash gale ruffin' aye its face
 Aneath the alders cool ;
 Or if the spring will have her clouds,
 Then let them pass me soon ;
 Or, if they tak' a thought and stay,
 Then let it be at noon.
Or if the spring, &c.

O! freshly from his mountain holds
Comes down the rapid Tyne ;
But Coquet's still the stream o' streams,
So let her still be mine ;
There's mony a sawmon lies in Tweed,
An' mony a trout in Till ;
But Coquet—Coquet aye for me,
If I may have my will.
There's mony a sawmon, &c.

Let it be "stream an' stream about ;"
Or if that may-na be,
Take off old Coquet where ye like,
From Thirlmoor to the sea ;
But leave to me the streams I love—
The streams that know my hand,
An' "weight to weight" with the best he
That's in Northumberland.
But leave to me, &c.

Let me begin at Brinkburn's stream,
Fast by the ruins grey,
An' end at bonny Ely-haugh,
Just wi' the endin' day.
My foremost flee, the heckle red—
My tried rod springin' free ;
An' "creel to creel" wi' ony man
In a' the north countrie!

[CHORUS.]

CHORUS.

My foremost flee, the heckle red—
My tried rod springing free ;
An' "creel to creel" wi' ony man
In a' the north countrie !

NEWCASTLE, *April* 1829.

THE OLD ANGLER'S TRIUMPH.

"If it be true that, in order to insure lyrical perfection, the words ought to accord exactly and fully with the spirit and expression of the music to which they are wedded, then has the following composition one claim, at least, upon its readers' kind indulgence. It was written by me at Middleton, in Teesdale, whither considerations of health and recreation had led me to sojourn for a few weeks. When not in full occupation, it has often happened to me to be *haunted*, as it were, by the spirit of some favourite tune, for two or three days together. Such was the case here. A deluge of rain had imprisoned me in the house, and the strange, wild, exulting rant, to which the following stanzas are tacked, had got into my head, I knew not how, and would not be got out again. Under these odd circumstances, it occurred to me that, if I could, in self-defence, compose a 'Fishing Song' in accordance with such an air, it would stand in pleasant relief when compared with its more grave and sober predecessors. The attempt was made; and I thought well enough of what I had done to send it by post to Mr Roxby, desiring him either to throw it into the fire or to make a better of it, as might seem most meet in his own eyes.

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On my return, I found that it had sorted exactly with his humour. He had made various verbal alterations, most of which heightened the drollery, whilst they improved the peculiar phraseology, and he at once consented to the publication of the song, or rather rant, as part of the series. With the majority, who prefer reckless gaiety to sentiment of any kind, I believe this composition was long a favourite. With the more judicious it will pass for what it is worth."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"Fun, frolic, and playfulness pervade this effusion. The ease is wonderful with which many of the short words come tripping in after each other."—*Mr White's MSS.*

The Old Angler's Triumph.

TUNE—"Auld Sir Simon."

AT Shilmore they're guid at the mennim ;
 At Felton they're guid at the flee ;
 Lang Rothbury's streams for the brandlin' ;
 But Weldon, old Weldon for me !
 The Sharperton codgers are cunnin' ;
 At Thropton they're guid at a thraw :
 But up wi' the bonnie red heckle—
 The heckle that tackled them a' !

CHORUS—But up, &c.

The black-flee is guid when it's airly ;
 The May-flee is deadly in spring ;
 The midge-flee may do in fair weather ;
 For foul, sawmon-roe is the king :
 But let it be late or be early,
 The water be drumly or sma',
 Still up wi' the bonnie red heckle—
 The heckle that tackled them a' !

Still up, &c.

In April they thresh'd for a wager,
Thro' June they were trollin' like mad,
The shade-fishin' skulkers in July
Went slinkin' for what could be had ;
An' every man cam wi' his pannier,
An' wha but maun gie them the wa' ?
Till they heard o' the bonnie red heckle—
The heckle that tackled them a' !
Till they, &c.

There was some they went out in the gloamin',
And some they got up wi' the lark ;
Some poach'd wi' a net i' the mornin',
An' some they laid traps i' the dark :
But *that* for their meshin' and threshin' !
Fish fair, or contrary to law ;
Still it's up wi' the bonnie red heckle—
The heckle that tackled them a' !
Still it's up, &c.

The Tweed, he may brag o' his sawmon,
An' blaw of his whitlins the Till,
There's pikes i' the pools o' Reed water,
But Coquet's the top o' them still :
So fill up your broad brimmin' glasses,
An' fishermen stand in a raw,
An'—Success to the bonnie red heckle,
The heckle that tackled them a' !
An'—Success, &c.

There's wine i' the cellars o' Weldon,
If ye ken the turn o' the key ;
There's bonnie braw lasses o' Coquet,
If ye ken the blink o' their e'e ;
There's braw yellow trouts up at Brinkburn,
If ye ken the place where to thraw ;
So here's to the bonnie red heckle—
The heckle that tackled them a' !

CHORUS.

So here's to the bonnie red heckle—
The heckle that tackled them a' !

NEWCASTLE, *August* 1830.

THE FISHER'S INVITATION

TO

HIS FRIEND IN NEWCASTLE.

"THIS song was, I believe, commenced and written in 1831, after the contested election for Northumberland, in which I threw away both money and time that I could ill spare. It was a sort of commemoration of one of the last very pleasant and successful visits which we paid to 'our old home of Weldon.' We went over (or at least I did) to get rid of the harass, worry, and empty shoutings, which were foreign to the disposition of both. The weather was not such as could be called favourable for fishing with the artificial fly, but it was fine. Clear-water fishing was always Roxby's *forte*; and his favourite motto was 'fine and far off.' Here, where so much depended on a beautifully thrown line, he was always pre-eminent; and he was so on this occasion. We were in the mood to exert ourselves; and we did so, through the best part of four days, with a success that, even then, I deemed rather surprising. The song hits off, happily enough, the feeling of that time. It has a sort of *vive la bagatelle*! humour about it which most

men have experienced some time in their lives, and which all sportsmen, whether in the stream or on the moor, will recognise. The latter and more sententious verses are from my pen. I believe this is one of those lyrics that has been most often sung. This does not surprise me. It is fairly well fitted to its air; and that air is so admirable that it will carry anything through."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"An excellent Garland, in which there is more knowledge of the world revealed by a few glances than many who claimed some acquaintance with Mr Roxby would be inclined to believe. It is, however, truly his own, and portions are done in his best manner. Some observations in the latter stanzas linger on our memory like proverbs, that reach the centre of moral truth. Hence it is that, to the true poet, all things are clear as the sun at noonday; and to the mirror of his art he is indebted for reflecting them back again upon mankind."—*Mr White's MSS.*

The Fisher's Invitation to his Friend in Newcastle.

TUNE—"Tak' your auld Cloak about ye."

THE snaws are gane frae haugh and hill,
 An' Coquet's streams rin merrily ;
 An' mony a troutie we will kill,
 If thou'll but gang an fish wi' me ;
 I've bought a creel, I've bought a gad,
 Brass wheel an' line, and tackle rare ;
 We'll wile the skeggar frae his haud,
 An' pou him out wi' heuk and hair.

I saw twa fishers frae Linsheels,
 This verra day they spak wi' me,
 But Thursday gane they fill'd their creels,
 The trouts they lap sa eydently.
 The pools are glitterin' i' th' beam—
 The primrose blooms at Brinkburn Ha' ;
 The sawmon's lyin' in the stream ;
 The westlin breezes saftly blaw.

The laverock 's liltin' i' the sky,
And hails the gentle genial spring ;
A' nature now is rife o' joy,
An' hill an' glen wi' music ring ;
Then grip thy gad, and don thy creel ;
For ilka thing there's time an' tide ;
Thraw beuks an' bizz'ness to the deil,
An' gang awa' to Coquet-side.

"A penny saved 's a penny got,"
An' penny greed aft mak's the man ;
An' aye it seems to be our lot
To toil for gear, do what we can.
Some end as puir as they began ;
Some dee pufft up wi' worthless pride ;
But, rich or puir, "life's but a span"—
An' we'll enjoy 't at Coquet-side.

There's mony a ane has siller ore,
That finds it downa make him smile ;
There's mony a ane has gowden store,
Wha wears a heavy heart the while.
It's guid, sometimes, to stay an' toil ;
It's guid, sometimes, to wander free ;
Folk loup the dyke when there's nae style ;
Sae aff to Coquet-side wi' me.

A man may glow'r in mony a beuk,
An' after a' may end, an ass ;
A man may have a hidin' neuk,
An' yet be twin'd o' a' his brass ;
A man may win a tocher'd lass,
An' find her but a canker'd bride ;
It's daffin' gars the warld pass—
Sae up an' aff to Coquet-side.

NEWCASTLE, *April* 1832.

THE AULD FISHER'S LAST WISH.

"BETWEEN the date of the publication of the last Garland and that of the present occurs an interval of eight years. During that interval it was my impression that, as far as we were concerned, the publication of these trifles had ceased for ever. Their originator, having then passed that period of life which fanciful persons have designated 'the grand climacteric,' began not only to lose his elasticity of spirit, but to experience the physical deficiencies of old age. We still occasionally sought the banks of our much-loved Coquet, but not with the same zest as heretofore. My companion could no longer enjoy the sport as was his wont. His strength no longer enabled him, without great fatigue, to

'Climb the dykes an' knowes ;'

and a contraction of the sinews of the second and third fingers of the right hand, though it did not prevent his using a pen, would not permit him, in spite of all devices, to wield a fly-rod for any length of time without great pain and suffering. These drawbacks gradually made that which was before only pleasurable become tiresome and unsatisfactory ; and the banks of

the Coquet gradually ceased to attract to them the old man, who felt he could no longer, as formerly, enjoy them. Reminiscences took the place of realities. The memory supplied a faint copy of pleasures now no otherwise to be attained, and the ideal gradually usurped the functions of the real Coquet.

“Circumstances had also combined to estrange me from the sports and pastimes of earlier years. In 1830 the pressure of events brought about that general call for a reformation of the political institutions of the country which produced the Reform Act of 1832, and has more or less agitated the surface of society ever since that time. This spirit awoke into action many men who had hitherto only been spectators of the party wranglings which are generally termed ‘politics,’ in which they were unable to feel any interest. It was now hoped by such men that the nation was about to shake off the apathy that had so long disgraced it; that patriotism was once more beginning to take the place of selfishness, and moral enlightenment of shortsighted worldliness. That they were mistaken in their estimate of the motives of many around them was perhaps more of a misfortune than a fault. The error, at all events, was on the better side of human nature; and thus far, we may assume, not a subject either for shame or for regret. It induced, however, many to leave realities in order to pursue shadows—myself amongst the rest. I had hitherto, from my earliest youth, been a worshipper of nature and of poetry, and, as far as my occupation permitted, an ardent student and a general lover of literature and science. These

now, for a time, were whelmed beneath those political surges which overswept everything. I only allude to these things to explain that which seems to call for explanation—not from any love of the topic.

“In 1841, a new and somewhat serious ‘change came over the spirit of my dream.’ My life, thus far, had been tolerably free from those reverses which throw dark shadows upon the current of existence, or make it flow cold and benighted, until it is lost in that final cloud of oblivion which closes over the greatest and the smallest of this earth. It now pleased heaven to ‘try me with affliction,’ and at a time when such a trial is felt to be most severe—that is to say, when we have fallen into ‘the sere and yellow leaf,’ but whilst we still have a family depending upon our exertions. The blow was sudden, unexpected, and in its own nature impossible to be foreseen, being the act of a foreign government. It involved in more or less of mishap some hundreds of British subjects, who were thus, by this unprecedented interference with the course of commerce, made to suffer a loss which ought to have fallen on foreigners. Its nature was such that, even when the whole truth came to be known, any honourable evasion of its effects was impossible. Further detail would be useless and irrelevant. Suffice it to say, that it now became my duty to apply myself, not only to such humble but virtuous employments as might enable me to maintain those still dependent upon me, but to such occupations as might help still to secure for me that equanimity, of which continued activity under depressing circumstances is the best

support. These I partly found in literature, which, cultivated in youth as an amusement, in age became a resource. The acquisition of wealth had never been a passion with me, as with some men ; nor had I ever valued its possession by others ; and I now found that it was well for me that it had been thus. I could still take a lively interest in pursuits which had afforded so much early and innocent pleasure ; and to the Garlands of a former day I sometimes turned with satisfaction, and even delight. I believe the song which follows was a good deal prompted by the air to which it is composed, and which I had known from very childhood. I never saw it in any collection ; and I have often been inclined to set it down as one of those few airs remarkable for powerful, original expression, which are to be found, preserved by tradition, in the North of England, but which have escaped the collectors of ancient ballad music. Be that as it may, it has ever lived in my memory ; and in the lines which follow I only translated the language of music into that of words.

“Soon after the song was thrown off, my old friend happening to call upon me, I read it to him ; and the emotion it excited in him proved that I had touched a true chord. The result was that it was published as a continuation of the former series. I acceded to this, or rather pressed this, partly from a faint hope that in him also there might be a resuscitation of former feelings and former powers. In this, however, I was disappointed. That spring and elasticity of spirit, which seem essential to lyrical efforts, were now gone ; and in

such rhyming attempts as he afterwards made, (one of which is printed in the Appendix,) I saw sometimes that years had injured even his ear for the melody of verse, and that he fell into rhythmical lapses, from which his earlier compositions were perfectly free. Such a destroyer is Time! and so transient is human faculty!"
—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"I have elsewhere made special allusion to this beautiful lyric. Old age brings its frailty; and it is then, when we recall the past, with all its crowd of associations, that a vacuity of heart is experienced. Still, the cords of our affection being unloosed, objects that interested us in early life will appear radiant, as if the sun that shone upon them at that period had never since set. Again, if the symptoms of declining health render it doubtful whether we ever may revisit the scenes of youth, they become doubly dear to us; and this impression is briefly but exquisitely delineated in the following stanzas. These remarks are, of course, meant to apply to those who have lived in the country, and are acquainted with scenery similar to that so faithfully described by the author."—*Mr White's MSS.*

The Auld Fisher's Last Wish.

TUNE—"My Love is newly listed."

THE morn is grey, and green the brae, the wind is frae the wast ;
 Before the gale the snaw-white clouds are drivin' light and fast ;
 The airly sun is glintin' forth, owre hill, and dell, an' plain ;
 And Coquet's streams are glittrin', as they rin frae muir to main.

At Dewshill Wood the mavis sings beside her birken nest ;
 At Halystane the laverock springs upon his breezy quest ;
 Wi' eydent e'e, aboon the craigs, the glead is high in air,
 Beneath brent Brinkburn's shadowed cliff the fox lies in his lair.

There's joy at merry Thristleyhaugh the new-mawn hay to win ;
 The busy bees at Todstead-shaw are bringing hinny in ;
 The trouts they loup in ilka stream, the bird's on ilka tree ;
 Auld Coquetside is Coquet still—but there's nae place for me.

My sun is set, my eyne are wet, cauld poortith now is mine ;
Nae mair I'll range by Coquet-side, and thraw the gleesome line ;
Nae mair I'll see her bonnie streams in spring-bright raiment drest,
Save in the dream that stirs the heart when the weary ee's at rest.

Oh ! were my limbs as ance they were, to jink across the green ;
And were my heart as light again, as sometime it has been ;
And could my fortunes blink again, as erst when youth was sweet,
Then Coquet—hap what might beside—we'd no be lang to meet.

Or had I but the cushat's wing, where'er I list to flee,
And wi' a wish, might wend my way owre hill, an' dale, an' lea ;
'Tis there I'd fauld that weary wing, there gaze my latest gaze,
Content to see thee ance again—then sleep beside thy braes !

NEWCASTLE, *May 1, 1841.*

AULD AND YOUNG.

"THE following song was written to inspirit, as it were, my old companion, to accompany me as far as Haltwhistle, in order to see that portion of the South Tyne. The expedition was made in the height of summer—some time, I think, in July—and was less for the sake of angling than to view the streams and the scenery. We got a few trout, and I never saw him throw a line again. It turned out, alas! to be 'the last of our fields.' *Sic transit gloria.*"—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"A good lyric, though rather unequal in its structure, sometimes showing a slight halt in the sentiment. Still the reader cannot be mistaken in other passages bearing ample proof of the 'maister's hand.'" —*Mr White's MSS.*

Auld and Young.

TUNE—"Fie! gae rub her owre wi' strae!"

It's Mayday this—the wale o' days—
 The westlin wind blaws saft an' free,
 Far i' the sky, their notes o' joy
 The lav'rock quire are liltin' hie.
 Hear them ye may—ye cannot see!
 The dew-drap sparkles on the thorn;
 And Nature says to ear and e'e
 "This is"—my boy—"a simmer's morn."

Round Shilhope Law young Coquet's stream—
 A half-grown syke—is wimplin' wild;
 She bids "guid morn" to Barra Burn,
 Like child forgath'rin' in wi' child.
 'Mang Rowhope Craigs the winds, beguil'd,
 An angry speat send down the vale;
 And owre the linn, wi' bickerin' din,
 She's foamin' like the heady ale!

'Neath Harbottle's auld castle wa',
Amang the cliffs she boils amain ;
Frae rifted rock to woody shaw ;
Frae stalwart craig to auld grey stane.
Down, speedin' hameward, she is gane
Past lanely Hepple's ruin'd peel ;
And wha begins aboon the whins,
At Flotterton may load his creel.

I canna climb the brent hill-side,
Where stripling Coquet first is seen ;
Where 'neath the Bell-rigs' shadow wide,
The silly sheep lie down at e'en :
I canna climb the knowes, sae green,
Where round "the bend" the river steals,
Or where she wars, amang the scaurs,
Her weary way to rough Linn-shiels.

Still we can toddle, fit by fit,
To Brinkburn where the breeze hits fine ;
The auld man's nae sae crazy yet,
But he can thraw a winsome line.
'Gin there we fail, we'se no repine :
When smelts are eydent, trouts are shy ;
And i' th' slack, by the dam-back,
We'se maybe raise a grilse forbye !

It's ill the mountain-side to spiel,
When ance the knees begin to fail ;
When ance the snaws o' age we feel,
It's ill to thole the mountain gale,
"Slaw wark maks sicker" 's an auld tale !
Where'er they loup we'll tak' our stand ;
An' thou shall say, lad, mony a day,
"It's weel to ken—the maister's hand."

NEWCASTLE, *May 1, 1842.*

THE ANGLER'S ADIEU FOR THE SEASON.

"THE following lines were written, for the most part, for the sake of the singular and very fine air to which they are tied, and the expression of which they attempt to embody. It is included in most collections of Scotch melody, and is doubtless an old air, as it appears in that exquisite mixture of satire the most keen and biting, comedy the most pleasing and rich, and music the most appropriate and beautiful—*The Beggars' Opera*—where it is given under its usual designation of 'The bonnie grey-eyed Morn.'* Mr Roxby took great pains in correcting this song, and (whether rightly or not, I cannot say) was very fond of it. I am since informed that the thought embodied in the four concluding lines is to be found in another Coquet-dale poem. I can only say,

* The history of the true authorship of that wonderful composition of satire, irony, wit, poetry, and music, *The Beggars' Opera*, is a curious literary question. The problem, as it appears to me, is capable of solution; and some day, peradventure, it may be solved. The late Mr Hazlitt narrowly missed it; but he omitted to follow the clue, the end of which, I think, he once held.—EDITOR.

‘Pereant illi qui ante nos nostra dixerunt.’ I thought it had been original.”—*Mr Doubleday’s MSS.*

“This can scarcely be called a lyric, for it lacks the lively measure which all pieces possess suitable for being sung to some musical instrument. It is a short reflective poem—not, however, without a tolerable share of harmony. In the last verse, where the stream at Warkworth is likened to a bride about to be given to her ocean-lord, the idea is taken from a poetical tract entitled ‘The Marriage of the Coquet and Alwine,’ which was written in imitation of a part of the fifteenth song in Drayton’s *Polyolbion*.”—*Mr White’s MSS.*

The Angler's Adieu for the Season.

TUNE—"The bonnie grey-eyed Morn."

ADIEU to thee, dear Coquet-side ! thou now art in thy prime !
 Rejoicing in thy music and the echoes of thy hills !
 Rejoice whilst yet thou canst rejoice, for soon shall come the time
 When frosts shall sit upon thy crags and dry up all thy rills ;
 When winds shall blaw and storms shall fa' among thy sources wild,
 And drift on drift, all grimly heap'd, deform thy flow'ry plain—
 Scarce struggling, slaw, beneath the snaw, thy waters now so mild :
 And this maun be, dear Coquet-side, or ere I come again !

Adieu to thee, Blindburn sae lone ! upon thy braes sae green
 Thy sheep now bask the livelong day aneath the brent hill-side ;
 And pleasant is the e'enin' hour, and pleasant is the scene
 To watch the herd wend owre the sward at gloamin' eventide.
 He stoops to drink upon thy brink ; and as his shadow moves,
 The scary trout glides swiftly out, to seek for shelter fain ;
 But winds shall sweep, an' rains swell deep, the waters that he loves :
 And this maun be, dear Coquet-side, or ere we meet again !

Adieu to thee, Linn-shiels sae rough ! amang thy beetlin' scaurs,
Aneath the beams the laughin' streams may sparkle an' may play ;
Now bright in sun, now dark in shade, the water as it wars,
Through rifted craig an' flood-worn cliff its journey and its way.
As owre each linn, wi' gleesome din, the streams come gurglin' gay,
There let the troller wave his gad an' strike "the mennim" fain,
For soon the floods o' winter wild shall roar frae bank to brae :
And this maun be, dear Coquet-side, or ere I come again !

Adieu to thee, auld Hepple Tower ! around thee, far an' wide,
The heather's purple on the muir, the bonnie whin's in bloom—
And thus it was by Coquet stream, beneath dark Simondside,
When mony a warrior, mould'rin' now, first found his Roman
tomb.

Flow sweetly down, flow proudly down, thy wild expanded dale,
And twine an' glint, aneath the sun, e'en like a siller chain ;
For when December's tempests come, its a' of sma' avail :
And this maun be, dear Coquet-side, or ere we meet again !

Adieu, adieu, sweet Weldon Brig ! the harvest on thy hill
Is waiting for the sickle's sweep, in a' its liveried gold ;
And down by bonnie Hedley Wood, where creep the waters still,
The trout has made, aneath the shade, deep, deep, his simmer
hold.

There, when the breeze just waves the trees, cast far an' fine "the
flee,"

And let it drap as saftly as can drap the simmer rain ;
For let the show'rs but show their powers, all fruitless will it be :
And this maun be, dear Coquet-side, or ere I come again !

Adieu to thee, gay Felton Park ! between thy yellow braes

Lang may thy waters keep their course, in stream an' spreadin'
pool ;

Adieu to woody Acklington, where aft the shadesman gaes,

His silent sport to follow still, beneath the boughs sae cool !

And last, adieu, grim Warkworth Tower ! where Coquet, like a
bride,

Beside her frowning guardian, to her ocean-lord is ta'en ;

Adieu, in all thy glorious garbs, adieu, sweet Coquet-side !

And be thou sure to shine as bright when next we meet again.

NEWCASTLE, *September 1, 1842.*

UP THE WREIGH!

"THE intention of the following was to describe the effects produced upon Anglers by a stormy day with frequent rain. On such occasions the experienced hands fly to worm-fishing as a *dernier ressort*, and betake themselves to the smaller tributary streams or 'burns.' Salmon-roe, prepared *secundum artem*, is also a favourite resource when the waters are swelled by sudden rains."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"Another good Garland, though it lacks the pointed pith of some of its predecessors. There is a good portion of vernacular language thrown into it, which would invest the stanzas with a permanent charm, had the spirit in which it is written been still more poetical."—*Mr White's MSS.*

Up the Wreigh.

TUNE—"John, come kiss me."

YESTREEN the clouds hung few an' mild,
 An' saft as maidens when they weep !
 Or gently lay on Simondside,
 Like bairns that cry themselves to sleep ;
 But, now, out owre the mountain tap,
 They're sweepin' wi' an' angry sky ;
 The veerin' blast blaws dead south-wast,
 —We'se cheat them a', an' up the Wreigh !

There's some awa' to Sharperton ;
 Frae Alwinton they're owre the knowe :
 Wi "mennim" some's to do the deed ;
 An' some wi' "heckles" like a towe.
 They dinna ken the mist that hings,
 Black—black—on Rowhope-head sae hie ;
 Where now it's toom, they'll seun a' soom,
 —We'se cheat them a', an' up the Wreigh !

There's braw lang trouts about Linn-shiels,
Amang the scaurs they'll haud their screen ;
Deil scale the byke frae Redlees Syke,
Wi' wairsh moss-water black an' lean !
At Harehaugh-turn and Keengie Burn,
They'll smell the weather i' the sky ;
On Carter-brow it's sleetin' now,
—We'se cheat them a', an' up the Wreigh !

It's unco weel to fill the creel,
When wunds blaw saft, and fish loup fast ;
But when the morn comes dank and dorn,
It tak's anither kind o' cast !
When gusty swirls mak cauldrie curls,
An' sweep the peuls, wi' sudden skreigh,
'Mang wund an' rain, it's no that plain,
—We'se cheat them a', an' up the Wreigh !

It's gaily to the norrid yet ; —
See Cheviot's ridges, blue in air ;
Aboon his pow, the gales may row,
But shem a cloud daur venture there.
Sae ye'se put on your sawmon-roe,
Whiles I a gowd-tail'd brandlin' try ;
She's comin' down, a bonnie brown,
—We'se cheat them a', an' up the Wreigh !

At Caistron-deeps, they're threshin' on,
An' down by Flotterton's new Ha';
I'se wad a pund, when night comes round,
That, creel for creel, we bang them a'!
It's spittin' now at Dewshill-wood;
At Hepple Peel it's far frae dry;
There's nane but feuls wou'd fish the peuls,
—We'se cheat them a', an' up the Wreigh!

NEWCASTLE, *March* 31, 1843.

(THE FISHER'S COURTSHIP.

"HERE the air again inspired the song. I first heard the humorous and characteristic air of 'The Women are a' gane wud' sung, amongst his collection of Jacobite songs, by my late lamented friend Mr Wilson, the celebrated Scottish vocalist. I was so taken with its spirit and humour that I made the attempt to embody the expression in a fishing song. How far I have succeeded the reader must judge."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"The author in this lyric comes out under a new aspect. His eye brightens up in the presence of one of the rustic damsels in Coquet-dale, whom he addresses on his way to the stream, and proposes to show her the fisher's craft for a trifling remuneration. The comparisons between wiling the trout from the stream, and his liability to be captivated in the same way by innocence and beauty, are happily and humorously drawn. With the exception of a couplet or two, considerable freedom is shown in the versification."—*Mr White's MSS.*

The Fisher's Courtship.

TUNE—"The Women are a' gane wud."

Hout! lassie ye're dune wi' the kye,
 Sae canna ye wander wi' me,
 The craft o' the fisher to try,
 The cast o' his tackle to see.
 For ilk fish i' the creel that may glint,
 Gin a kiss he may aiblins require,
 The riddle we'll read—or deils' in't,
 O' wha'll be the foremost to tire,
Hout! lassie, &c.

The streams are a' purlin' in joy;
 The lav'rocks are up i' the lift;
 The herd he gaes whistlin' by,
 Forgettin' the storm an' the drift.
 Sae come, an' ye'll soon understand
 How we 'tice baith the blate an' the slee,
 Wi' a wily bit waft o' the hand,
 An' a gleesome bit glance o' the e'e!
Hout! lassie, &c.

Oh! come—an' ye'se see wi' what airt
The troutie we'll wile frae the pool,
An' gar him for ever to pairt,
Frae his haud sae secure an' sae cool.
Just as some—that ye ken o'—their breath
Can hardly get leave for to draw,
An' dread that they've come by their death,
Ere they kent thirsells stricken ava!
Hout! lassie, &c.

Oh! come—we'se gae up by the Trows,
Where the burnie rins wimplin' and clear;
Where the breckan an' wild heather grows,
An' the wild-rose is sweet on the brier.
Where amang the grey craigs, i' the beam,
The flowers spring in fragrance an' pride,
In token that love is nae dream—
If ye seek him by sweet Coquet-side.
Hout! lassie, &c.

Or to Usway let's gae,—an' we'll draw
The sawmon frae out o' his lair,
Wi' this slender wee hazel sae sma',
And this linklet o' bonnie brown hair.
Sae a heart may be strang in its might,
Yet bend—a sair penance to dree—
To a taper bit finger sae white,
Or the glance o' a hazel-bright e'e!
Hout! lassie, &c.

Oh! come, an' we'se rove by the streams,
Till the sun's sunken far i' the west ;
An' if weary we get wi' his beams,
In the shade o' the valley we'll rest.
There the true "fisher's knot" ye shall see,
The secret shall cost but a kiss ;
And when tied—gin ye canna win free—
We maun e'en let it bide as it is.
Hout! lassie, &c.

NEWCASTLE, *April* 10, 1844.

THE MORNIN' AIRLY.

"HAVING taken a look at the streams of the South Tyne at Haltwhistle, my old friend and I had contemplated a similar excursion, to be made in the height of summer, up to Falstone, on North Tyne. The stanzas that follow were composed in allusion to this intention, which was doomed never to be carried into effect. The reader will perceive it embodies a description of a trout-stream during the heat of a dry and sultry summer, when the water is as clear as crystal, and when the most experienced fly-fisher is almost sure to be foiled. My old friend was wonderfully skilful under such circumstances; and if the lines have merit as a lyric, it must be attributed to his suggestions and corrections."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

"This is the last song published, and by no means the worst of the series. It is finely versified, consisting nearly altogether of short popular words, that chime in deftly with each other. Neither is there any falling off in the spirit with which the song is written. The allusion to the 'callant's' success during a flood, at the commencement of the last stanza, is one of the 'palpable hits' which the author, in his mode of fence, would sometimes deal out so very appropriately."—*Mr White's MSS.*

The Mornin' Airly.

TUNE—"Corn rigs are bonnie."

It's late, my lad, to tak the gad ;
 All nature's now in motion ;
 The floods o' May hae swept away
 The sawmon's fry to ocean ;
 In Dewshill, lang, the throstle's sang
 He's been rehearsin' cheerly ;
 Our only line's "far aff an' fine,"
 And tak the mornin' airly.

Up through the glens, amang the staens,
 The burns wi' heat seem dryin' ;
 Slaw, tired and still, by Little Mill,
 Wi' worm the shadesman's hiein' ;
 Ahint the bush that hauds the thrush
 He now can shelter rarely ;
 Our only line's "far aff an' fine,"
 And tak the mornin' airly.

At Alwinton the washin's on,
And loud the lads are singin' ;
To see the sheep spang, soom and dreep,
The Dale wi' laughter's ringin' ;
Het, tired, an' dry, the thirsty kye
The fords are taking fairly ;
Our only line's " far aff an' fine,"
And tak the mornin' airly.

Yet, through the trees, there's still a breeze ;
The pool the gale is curling ;
Beneath the beam, the glitterin' stream
Is owre the pebbles purling ;
We're no' the sort to lose our sport
Because the stream rins clearly ;
But thraw the line " far aff an' fine,"
And tak the mornin' airly.

The gleg-e-ed trout, we'll pick him out,
Amang the staens fu' deftly ;
Our flees shall fa', the verra snaw
Can come nae down sae saftly
We'll 'tice them here, we'll 'tice them there—
What though they loup but sparely?—
Wi' a cast o' line " far aff an' fine,"
All in the mornin' airly.

When floods come down, a callant loon
May catch them wi' a tether,
And sawmon roe be a' "the go"
For gowks in rainy weather ;
But gi'e to me the light midge flee,
When streams are rinnin' clearly,
And a cast o' line "far aff an fine,"
All in the mornin' airly!

NEWCASTLE, *July 1, 1845.*

THE AULD FISHER'S ADVICE.

"THE following stanzas were never printed. They were thrown off one day in the spring of 1846, and sent to my old friend for criticism and correction. He generally approved of them, but suggested one or two alterations, which I begged him to make. His health was, however, at that time in a very precarious state, and I never saw the alterations which were made. I believe, however, they were merely verbal. During the summer of that year, the powers of his stomach, which had been for a year or two in a failing state, completely left him, and by a slow exhaustion closed this scene of his existence. During his last illness I saw a fair copy of the song in his own handwriting, together with my own copy, upon his table, but I have not been able to recover either. The song now given is therefore necessarily printed (with one or two alterations) from my own rough draught, without the benefit of my friend's corrections."—*Mr Doubleday's MSS.*

The Auld Fisher's Advice.

TUNE—"Had I the Wyte?"

YE ken the stream, it drives amain,
 Now in the sunbeam sparklin',
 Now rushing fast, mid mony a stane,
 Beneath the allers darklin :
 Now whirlin' in the pool at last,
 Wi' mony a circlin' eddy ;
 Now still, where esh and plane-tree cast
 Their shadows cool an' steady. .

The wind was scant, the sun was bright,
 Nae cloud to cast a shadow ;
 The pebbles red show'd back the light
 Like flowrets in a meadow.
 The wind was scant, the cast was fine,
 The flee fell saft an' slyly ;
 A curl—and checks at once the line—
 'Tis he—but he comes shyly !

In vain the stream rins laughin' on,
In vain the breeze comes sighin',
Till frae the branches, one by one,
The shrivell'd leaves are flyin'.
In vain, against yon pebbly brae,
The gurglin water's foamin';
Ye toil in vain, he'll tak his way—
We'se try him in the gloamin'.

'Twill no be lang or ere the sun
Shall set behind the Cheviot,.
An thraw his latter rays upon
Clear Jed an' woody Teviot.
'Twill no be lang ere Simondside
Stands dim an' dark in shadow,
An' mists frae Coquet's bosom glide
Ow're mony a haugh an' meadow.

Then ye'se put on your best moth-flee,
When e'enin's dew's are fallin',
And, frae his screen in bush or tree,
The mellow throstle's callin';
An' I'se put on my mennim gear,
When moonlight's just beginnin',
An' to the streams, frae far and near,
The hungry trouts are rinnin'.

An' first we'se try a cast aboon,
Just where the stream gaes birlin',
And sets the pool, aneath the moon,
In mony a wrinkle swirlin'.
Then, gin ye fail, I'se tak a cast,
E'en where the stream is foamin';
The mennim's sure his doom at last,—
We'se hae him in the gloamin'!

March 1846.

CONCLUSION.

"I CANNOT quit these songs, to me the eloquent memorials of happier times, without saying a few words as to the character of their originator. He was born and nurtured, and resided until his twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year, chiefly at Monkridge Hall, near Otterburn, in the vale of Reed, which is a tributary of the North Tyne. He was educated under the care of a respectable grazing farmer, in whose hands the little fortune left him by his father, who died whilst his son was yet in infancy, was placed. His education was of that plain sort which the country, at that time, afforded. He was a good accountant, however, and understood land-surveying so well that I have often wondered he had not made it his profession when misfortune overtook him. I have seen plans of estates, surveyed by him, remarkable for neatness, and I should guess for accuracy. From his earliest years, the poetical temperament seems to have been predominant in him; and to this was joined an intense love of the country, and of field-sports, which he retained to the very last. He was intended by his guardian for a grazing farmer, for of grazing the Northumberland border farming chiefly consists; but for this it is pretty clear nature

never designed him. He never could become a bargain-maker, nor a critical judge of the qualities of cattle or sheep. He could plough moderately well ; and this seems to have been the extent of his farming craft. In fact, the mixed romance and simplicity of his character unfitted him for any pursuit which requires what is called 'knowledge of the world'—a sort of knowledge he never attained, nor wished to attain.

"Such being his turn of mind, the earlier years of Robert Roxby were spent, in fact, with the fowling-piece and fishing-rod in his hand, and in the perusal of such works of imaginative literature as he could procure. He eagerly read and studied all the British poets whose works were within his reach. The novel and the romance had for him an irresistible charm ; and in the lighter general literature of the time he was tolerably well versed. Farther, however, he wished not to go. Even of the history of his own country he knew little ; and to the politics of the day he had so decided an aversion that I daresay he seldom could have told, if asked, who was prime-minister. In fact, Shakspeare and Burns were at this time his principal study—for his books were few. Milton he read, but I believe only partially relished ; and it always appeared to me that the songs of Burns had produced the most powerful impression on his earlier mind—the beauty of the poetry being aided by that of the Scotch airs, of which he was passionately fond. He was by no means gifted with that which musicians term 'a good

ear for music ;' nor do I believe he had even the ordinary relish for harmonious combination. In fact, he had an aversion to that which is called 'scientific composition.' But into the poetry of music his temperament had early led him. The meaning and expression of the ancient and exquisite airs of Scotland he well understood ; and they produced upon him corresponding effects. To use his own words, 'some of the auld airs put him half crazy.' Even when a boy, he could shed tears over the pathos of 'Gilderoy ;' could march with Bruce at Bannockburn to the air of 'Hey ! tuttie, taittie !' or be transported by the social reminiscences of 'Auld Langsyne.' He was in early life fond of dancing ; and the effect upon him of some of the Scotch reels and strathspeys was, to the last, very remarkable. The melody seemed to bring back to him his youth again. He was again, in imagination, in the rustic ball-room at Otterburn or Harbottle—

'His guests the shades of former years ;
His toasts to lips that bloom'd no more !'

"Upon such an imagination the moors, the streams, and natural forest-scenery of Reed Water of course produced their effects. He saw them with the eyes and feelings of a poet. He roamed amongst them with his gun and his pointers, and his fishing-gad and creel : but to him they were poetry ; and to the last hour of his life his soul lived amongst them. To the pursuits of angling he was most attached, although in other respects a successful and accomplished sportsman. In his management of the artificial fly he was

perhaps unrivalled in some respects ; though some anglers, I think, knew more of the habits of fish than he did. His admiration for river scenery, even to the minutest particular, was at the root of the whole of his angling sportsmanship ; as was his love for the wild solitude of the moors, in a great measure, the source of his pleasure in grouse-shooting. Hence no one knew better than he where fish or birds were most likely to be found, for, in one sense, he might be said to dwell amongst them ; and thus he lived till his twenty-fifth year—a sportsman-poet more than a poetical sportsman, for the poetry was in him the dominant feeling. For the chase he had no love. It was too boisterous and too noisy ; nor did he sympathise with those who followed it.

“ To these pursuits, so congenial to his nature, misfortune put, for a time, an unexpected end. Mr Roxby was now compelled, by the failure of the guardian in whose hands his little fortune was still deposited, to leave Redesdale and to seek his fortune in Newcastle. After a short time his excellent character and acquirements procured him an eligible situation in the bank of Sir William Loraine and Co., and afterwards in that of Sir Matthew White Ridley and Co., in which he remained until within two or three years of the close of his life.* This change in

* Prior to his engagement by Sir William Loraine & Co. he found a few months' employment, as clerk to a brewery, at Whitley, a sea-side village near North Shields. Of this portion of his life I have heard him relate two characteristic anecdotes. One was, that finding, when on the road to the place of his new

his position did not in any degree alter the character of his mind. His native good sense and prudence taught him the propriety of strict, accurate, and conscientious attention to the business of his office. This the native integrity of his heart secured; but beyond this he remained the same single-minded, simple-minded, benevolent, and romantic being that he set out. Into business on his own account, though often solicited, and permitted to engage by his employers, he would never enter. To its cares and complications he had through life an instinctive aversion. A visit to his native vale of Reed, or to the valley of the Coquet, was the height of his ambition; the composition of such few poetical pieces as he has left afforded him occasional recreation; and an enlarged reading filled up the remnant of his time. After poetry and romance, biography and general criticism were his lines of reading; and, of prose authors, the romances of Scott and the *Life of Johnson* by Boswell were his favourites; to which, perhaps, might be added that singular work—certainly that of a man of genius and erudition—*The Life of John Bunce*. Of the songs of Moore, when he became acquainted with them, he had the highest possible opinion, placing them only second to those of Burns. To Allan Cunningham's ballads he also assigned a high

employment, that he had a single halfpenny left in his pocket, he threw it into the sea, that he might say he literally began the world again without one! The other was, that the short period during which he was a brewer's clerk was the only one in his life through which he was "a Tee-totaller."

place. Hogg's lyrical compositions he placed below those of Cunningham ; nor do I think he estimated the songs of Sir Walter Scott as being equal to his other poetical works, although he held them in much esteem.

"Such, from his twenty-fifth to his seventy-third year, was the tenor of his life. About that period his employers judged the labours of his office too onerous for him, and at once settled upon him a handsome annuity, which he enjoyed for the remainder of his days. He had, through all this time, enjoyed nearly uninterrupted health, with the exception of a disease of the facial nerve, at that time thought to be paralytic, which gave his countenance a twist from which it never recovered ; but towards his seventy-sixth year his constitution began to exhibit symptoms of decided decay. The powers of his stomach failed. He could not digest such nutriment as he had power to swallow ; and his strength in consequence declined to a distressing feebleness. With some variations, this failure of appetite and digestion went on until July 1846, on the 28th of which month he left this brief and troublous existence, having preserved his senses and faculties nearly intact until within a few hours of his dissolution. He was in his seventy-seventh year. The peculiar bias of his character was strong in him to the last. His love of poetry, and his rough humour, never forsook him. Not very many days before his decease, he had altered and corrected some portions of the last song printed in this volume, and had written the whole over ; and one day, on my observing to him how thankful he ought to be that his illness involved so

little of bodily pain, he replied—"My good friend, let me tell you, it is no such *easy* matter to starve in the midst of plenty!" His person was as manly as his character; and in youth, I have been told, he was eminently handsome. His last resting-place is in the churchyard of the chapel of St Paul, at the west gate.

"His character, in many respects, resembled that of Goldsmith, especially in its better parts. Its basis was simplicity and honesty, with good sense—upon which the superstructure of poetry was raised. His mind had not an extensive range, nor could his intellect be called subtle; but, as far as they went, his intellectual powers were singularly perfect. The imaginative, to a certain extent, overlaid the reasoning powers. For logical argument or metaphysical discussion he had no taste. The presence of imagery was always necessary to rivet his attention. Of imaginative writing, however, his judgment was all but perfect, if not quite so. For myself, I may say that I hardly ever, during forty years' acquaintance, ventured to dissent from one of his decisions on works of imagination. For his critical decrees he would never, however, render the reasons; nor do I think it was in his power altogether to do so. His faculty of poetical tact amounted to a sort of intuition. Gifted thus with a sensitive mind and vivid imagination, he added to these a singular warmth of heart and strong benevolence. A tale of woe he could never resist, especially if told by a female. To relieve a woman in distress was to him a sacred duty, under all circumstances. This temperament caused him to be the victim of occa-

sional imposition ; but in such cases he was a perfectly willing victim. One day, being assured by a friend that a beggar-woman, to whom he had given a shilling, would forthwith disburse it for gin—‘Suppose she does, puir body,’ was the reply, ‘what then ? Do you never flee to a glass of brandy and way-ter (water) when your own spirits want rubbing up ?’ Thus, comparatively speaking, ‘a child to the ways of the world,’ yet when he suffered himself to think, or was asked to do so, his decisions were ever sensible and considerate ; and to the aberrations of others he was remarkably lenient. Though taking little interest in much that engages the attention of mankind in general, he yet in sentiment always took the liberal and independent side. To all tyranny, and to all religious intolerance or bigotry, he had a most uncompromising aversion, his maxim being that religion was an affair between man and his Maker, not to be profaned by mortal interference ; and upon this he acted through life. Though, after my acquaintance with him, he rarely went into mixed company, he was essentially social and companionable. To be so, however, he required the company of those who sympathised with his peculiar feelings and pursuits, and hence he did not ‘get on’ well (as it is termed) in ordinary society. To those who could so sympathise, however, his conversation was peculiarly pleasing, as far as simple earnestness, poetic feeling, graphic power, and warm-heartedness can throw a charm over human converse. He was never married. I believe narrow means, and a feeling of incapacity to struggle with the vicissitudes of life, kept him single ; for to one of his

temperament female fascinations must have been of potency ; and how deeply and keenly he had felt them in very early life, I became, by a singular chance, aware.* I believe, however, he judged for the best, as he ever did when he judged deliberately. Such was Robert Roxby ; and when I recall the mixed simplicity,† kindness, talent, and manliness of his character, and the many happy and innocent hours to which they ministered, those who knew him will, I am sure, sympathise with me, if masterless nature for once will have her way, and force me to blur the unconscious paper with a tear.

“I have often thought, and I still think, that the description given by the warm-hearted, reckless Burns, of his own feelings, was equally applicable to those of his devoted admirer, the late Robert Roxby :—

* The occasion was this. Mr Roxby and myself had, about the year 1822, gone into his native valley of Reed, to take a day's fishing and vary the scene. We staid at the inn at Horsley ; and as some rain had fallen amongst the hills, we proceeded upwards to fish the Cottons-hope Burn, a streamlet which joins the river Reed near its head, at a place called “the Burness.” My friend was in high spirits ; but as we proceeded amidst the windings of the hills I saw a sudden change. A deep depression seemed to seize him at a particular spot, which did not totally leave him during the day, in spite of all his efforts to conceal his want of cheerfulness. On questioning him as to the cause, the reply was decisive. “On that spot,” he said, “thirty-five years ago, nearly on this very day and month, I parted with Mary N—— and her brother—*never to see her more.*”

† His hatred of anything like foppery was very great. I remember, many years ago, meeting him in the street, when he accosted me after the following fashion : “Whee do ye think

'Awa ! ye selfish, warlie race,
 Wha think that havins, sense an' grace,
 E'en love an' friendship, should give place
 To " catch the plack ; "
 I dinna like to see your face,
 Nor hear your crack.

But ye, whom social kindness charms,
 Whose hearts the glow of friendship warms,
 Who hold your being on the terms,
 " Each aid the others ; "
 Come to my bowl—come to my arms—
 My friends, my brothers !'

" In throwing together the foregoing notices, I have only fulfilled, or rather, perhaps, essayed, a 'labour of love.' The compositions to which they relate are to me the memorials of a happy time—happier than any which I shall now ever again see on this side the grave.

I've just faa'n in with ! Whee but Neddy Hedley, of Woollaw, and a fine bargain he's made. What, think ye, he has bought ?" "Nay, I can't tell," said I ; "perhaps some new pipes,"—an instrument on which Mr Hedley played beautifully, and which caused him to figure as "the Minstrel" in Roxby's ballad poem *The Reedwater Minstrel*. "Naething half sae sensible," was the rejoinder. "No, no ! Neddy's gettin', forsooth, 'a portable rod,' and he's gangin' aff to Woollaw wi'd, to astonish the natives there. Only think o' Neddy Hedley an' his 'portable rod' flourishing up yonder ! Egad ! I've seen the time when Reedwayter folk didna ken what the word 'portable' meant !"

This "portable rod," which so excited the fisher-bard's spleen, was one in four pieces, which screwed together, for convenience in carriage ; an implement then uncommon in Northumberland, and certainly—*me judice*—very inferior in spring to the old-fashioned "gad" in two pieces, joined by means of a long splice and a couple of yards of waxed twine, *more majorum*.

In arranging them, I put them together as we gather and retain a few simple flowers, as the only memorials of the scenes amidst which they have been culled. In the eyes of the world they may fade and wither, but to me they must ever retain their grace, their freshness, and their beauty.

“From the perusal of the Coquet-dale Fishing Songs most readers will, I think, deduce one conclusion, which is, that such merits as they have are to be attributed a good deal to the actual circumstances under which they were written. They were composed under the excitement of a favourite and fascinating sport ; and that excitement various events contributed to heighten. On these occasions care was thrown aside ; social converse and music filled up the piscatory intervals ; and all the humorous whims and eccentricities of the parties got full vent and ample swing. As one expedition gave rise to a song, so that song played its part in stimulating another sally ; and the tone and bent of the strains obeyed the accidental accompaniments to their composition. Of humorous eccentricity the late Mr Roxby, on such occasions, was full ; and endless are the anecdotes to which his oddities gave rise. The very atmosphere of the country—as the sight of the heather was said to affect the late Sir Walter Scott—seemed to give double keenness to all his feelings ; and from this peculiarity, scenes the most ludicrous arose. One in particular I shall never forget ; so strange was the combination of the ludicrous with the solemn, and the benevolent with the profane.

We had set off, in a gig, at Whitsuntide, or 'Whussen-day,' as he called it, to have two days' fishing in the Coquet; and when we arrived at the little village of Stannington, on our road to Weldon Bridge, we pulled up at a small way-side public-house, the master of which happened to be overseer of the parish. On being ushered into the little parlour, we found it preoccupied by a rather numerous company, who had been assembled to attend some funeral, and who were ranged round the room, dressed in the livery of woe, and wearing those lugubrious faces which are deemed suitable to occasions of this sort. With this solemn assemblage we had little in harmony. There was, however, no alternative; and we accordingly sat down at a little table in a corner to partake of some bread and cheese, whilst our nag was munching his oats. I have already observed, that to a female tale of distress the ear of my friend was always open. He had also another peculiarity, and that was a most irritable impatience of thanks or blessings in return for any donation in the shape of relief. He, in fact, could not bear to hear magnified into notice that which he deemed a mere every-day duty; and this certainly laudable feeling was now fated to be rather sharply tried. Whilst sitting over our cheese and ale, we were suddenly roused by the voice of a woman, who was lamenting bitterly the absence of the overseer. She and her children, she said, were totally destitute. They were starving, and relief she must have. To her moan, however, a deaf ear was turned on all sides. In the overseer's absence no legal relief was forth-

coming, and in vain she appealed to the compassion of the solemn company, who seemed quite inclined, one and all, to suffer her and her children to starve, if starve they must, rather than put their hands in their pockets. My impatient companion, who was sitting rather out of sight, listened in silence for a minute or two, at the end of which he lost all self-command. 'Come back!' he said, in a voice more rough than melodious, to the poor forlorn creature, who, evidently somewhat astonished by this mode of address, submissively complied. 'Did you say you and your bairns were starving?' he asked, in his usual abrupt manner when excited. 'They're starving, sir,' answered the forlorn creature: 'as sure as God is in heaven, I haven't a bite to put in their mouths!' 'I'll never let a woman and her bairns starve!' was the reply; and glancing, as he did it, a stern look of bitter indignation at the solemn assembly, he put half-a-crown into her hand. 'There,' he said, 'take that hame; that will serve to keep the bairns from starving till the overseer comes back to-morrow.' 'The Lord shower down blessings upon your head!' ejaculated the poor creature; but this torrent of gratitude only augmented the irritation of the eccentric lover of angling. 'Hout-tout, wife! hout-tout, wife!' exclaimed he, motioning her to the door with no very polite gesture, 'what's a' this noise about? I daursay the Lord doesna care a — outhier for thou or me!' What effect this irreverent conclusion had upon the poor woman I cannot say; but amongst the close-fisted and solemn

assembly it produced a sensation so decided that I was fain to get back to our gig, and leave behind the charitable remarks that I saw were in store for us.

“To a mind of this temperament the various events of a fishing party were food for continuous and multi-form excitement. A victory achieved over an adverse state of the water or the weather, or over some rival in the craft, was a frequent source for exultation. If Mr John Pybus, the solicitor, of Newcastle, who is one of the most skillful and successful trollers with the minnow that I ever knew, happened to be there, a tacitly understood contention between the fly and the minnow was sure to take place. The odds were a little in favour of the latter, as far as weight was in question; inasmuch as when minnow-fishing is at its best, the season for artificial-fly fishing is beginning to decline. Sometimes, however, ‘the heckle’ in the hand of Roxby obtained a conquest over ‘the minnow,’ even in the hands of Mr Pybus; and on such occasions the triumph of the former was by no means remarkable for moderation. From such circumstances, and the excitement arising from friendly emulation of this description, many of these lyrics took their rise; and when the song was written, it more than once happened that considerable discussion took place before the air finally appended to it was decided upon and determined. Several of these musical ‘beds of justice’ were held before the wedding of the ‘Farewell to Coquet’ to that exquisite Irish air which is now its assigned tune, was ventured. In such conclaves the voices of Mr Robert Plummer and Mr

Train the artist were, besides my own, the most potential. The bard himself was singularly diffident as to his skill in detecting the aptitude or expression of tunes, and beyond a most determined aversion to 'whuttle-whuts,' which was his name for those queer complications of semi-quavers in which modern musicians sometimes indulge, and which he hated with a most energetic hatred, he seldom ventured an opinion on the subject. To verbal criticism, when applied to the songs themselves, he was by no means so submissive. In poetry his judgments were as decisive and confident as in music they were diffident; and critics here were not always treated by him with much ceremony. Being told one day that a fellow-angler, Mr William G——t, had raised an objection to some epithet in one of the Garlands, he very quietly replied, 'Babbles and nonsense! Wully G——t kens nae mair about poetry than an auld cow; and ye may say I say sae!'

"I, like my early friend, was brought up, and spent most of the years of my boyhood, in the country. Like him, too, my eye had been early caught by the charms of natural scenery; nor do I remember the time when the purl of a streamlet was not sweet music to my ears. This love of nature, when once acquired, cannot be lost — cannot be weakened. Cowper's well-known line,

'God made the country, but man made the town,'

was enough for me. The latter has always, when I have resided in it, appeared little better than a sort

of mitigated imprisonment ; and to this hour I deem it so. Consequently, during the angling excursions to which I advert, my own enjoyment was as intense as that of my friend ; and into all the whims and vagaries of the time I entered with a zest just as real as his own. In fact, this was the disposition of all parties ; and those days passed amidst the streams and woods, and those evenings filled with music and song, must, I dare say, always make up some of the most pleasing reminiscences of all that partook of them. To this combination of circumstances any merit which these lyrics possess must be, no doubt, in part attributed. But for the accidental throwing together, under these peculiar circumstances, of two or three men whose sympathies and tastes were in remarkable unison, these songs would not, and could not, have been written. They sprang from the actual impressions of these moments ; and to the truth and simplicity thus produced, their writers altogether trusted, it seems not in vain. In that truth certainly resides any hold which they have upon the mind of the reader. They are only good because they are Coquet all over. In their perusal we hear the purl of the streams ;—the varied scenery of the beautiful river rises before us ;—we see the whole—Hedley wood and the old mill of Weldon—the deep seclusion of Brinkburn—Rothbury, shut in by hills—the lofty Simondside and the distant Cheviots—the noble sweep of valley past Halystane—the lone homestead at Barraburn—the tottering ruins of Harbottle Castle, with the river struggling beneath it—the wilderness

of silent hills amid which the river takes its rise : all are brought before our vision, uninterrupted by meretricious ornaments or adventitious aids of any kind. This impress of truth and nature it is which lends to these unpretending compositions that touch of originality which most readers feel them to possess. It is because they are simply redolent of Coquet-dale, and graphic of the angler and his pursuits, that they stand distinct and apart amidst English lyrics ; their whole spirit being made up of feelings, which he who would imitate them must first experience."—*Mr Double-day's MSS.*

To this conclusive criticism there is nothing to be added. That these songs must long endure in the locality where they were originated, seems past a doubt. If this publication of them, in a collective shape, shall be the means of recommending them to distant, but kindred minds, with whose general sympathies they accord, its purpose will have been fully answered. The Editor cannot, however, conclude this portion of his work without acknowledging the aid he has received, during its progress, from more than one friend. To Mr Robert Plummer he is indebted for various suggestions, corrections, and additions ; whilst Mr Joseph Watson, the worthy secretary of the Coquet-dale Angling Club, has evinced that interest in the success of the volume which one literary man

only can feel for the work of another, and which constitutes, perhaps, the most pleasing accompaniment of all such undertakings, on whatever scale, or of whatever character.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

ACKLINGTON PARK.—A mansion, beautifully situated in the midst of wood, upon a bend of the river Coquet, about midway between the village of Felton and the town of Warkworth, and near a village of the same name.

ALWINE.—A small stream, which, rising in the district of Kidland to the north, amongst that extensive range of hills included under the term "Cheviots," joins the Coquet at the village of Alwinton, a little above Harbottle Castle. It is frequented by the angler chiefly after it has been swelled by rains, and is getting clear.

ALWINTON.—A small village, consisting only of a few scattered houses, amongst which is a public-house, which stands at the confluence of the Alwine and Coquet. Above Alwinton are only scattered farm-houses, generally at great distances from each other.

BARRABURN.—A small beck, which, rising north-westward near the Scottish border, runs into the Coquet some miles from the source of the river. Near its junction with the Coquet stands a farm-house, together with a few shepherds' cottages. Not far from Barra, or Barroughburn, is "the Wedder-loup," a remarkable strait of the river, well known to anglers.

BRINKBURN.—Brinkburn, Brenkburn, or Brekenburn, is the name of a beautiful and secluded bend of the Coquet, about a mile and a half above Weldon Bridge. The cliffs on the south side are high and precipitous, and crowned with natural wood. The northern bank is steep, and is also clothed with wood. In this sequestered spot stand the ruins of Brinkburn Abbey, of which the central tower is yet entire. Not far from the Abbey stands Brinkburn Hall, the seat of Colonel Cadogan; and a few hundred paces below is Brinkburn Mill. The scenery of this secluded situation is highly romantic. It seems to take its name from a small rivulet or "burn," which runs into the river from the south, a little above the commencement of the cliffs. Below Brinkburn the valley of the Coquet again expands, and the river winds through the midst of level haughs, of much beauty. The following sonnet, which is reprinted from *Housman's English Sonnets*, was inspired by this sweet scene :—

"Brinkburn!—if time shall spare me, as the weed,
 Cowering to earth, doth cheat the mower's blade,
 Shall I not smile, once more to thread this glade,
 And seek thy waters, murmuring in their speed?
 Here have I drunk of happiness indeed;
 And straying here, as heretofore I stray'd,
 Sure I shall meet with Pleasure, or her shade,
 Haunting, like me, the long-loved spot. 'Twill breed,
 Perchance, remembrances that bear a sting—
 A pensive joy that hath some kin to woe;
 Yet, if the unexpected drops that spring
 At sight of thee be sweeter in their flow
 Than aught of bliss that other scenes can bring,
 Why should I pause, or wish this were not so?"

BELL Rtg.—A lofty green hill, of a conical shape, towards the source of the river.

BLIND-BURN.—A beck or burn which joins the Coquet not many miles below the source of the river. Like all the rest of the burns towards the head of Coquet, it is full of trout.

CHEVIOT.—A mountain rising to the height of two thousand seven hundred feet above the level of the sea, which gives its name to a wild mountainous range, covering many miles of country north of the Coquet. It is the scene of the battle commemorated in the well-known ballad of "Chevy Chase."

CAISTRON.—A few houses on the north bank of the Coquet, a few miles above the town of Rothbury. Caistron is a corruption of "Castrum," an encampment, of which the Romans had many on the Coquet, as well as on the Reed.

Crag-end.—Crag-end is the east end of a long range of very wild crags, that extends from a little above Pepper-haugh nearly to the town of Rothbury, skirting the Coquet all the way. The road to Rothbury is beneath these crags, though it winds at a considerable height above the river; and at Crag-end the scene is wild in the extreme, immense masses of grey rock being piled upon each other, as by some tremendous convulsion of nature. From amidst these crags, about half way to Rothbury, issues a singularly limpid spring of water, which crosses the road and falls into the river. The following lines describe this scene not untruly :—

"Where, in huge heaps, the vast grey crags are thrown
Wildly together, on old Coquet's side;
As if Titanian blood that pass had dyed,
In some fierce, uncouth war, of times far gone;
From midst that surge of hoar, primæval stone,
The thirsty wanderer finds a runnel glide;—
In winter's storm, or sultry autumn-tide,

K

Still clear—unalter'd—beautiful—alone.

The summer's heat, the rush of melting snows,

Nor drink, nor soil, the sweetly-gushing rill :

'Tis sparkling, plenteous, pure, and gentle still.

So, if our course from antique virtue flows,

And changeless knowledge, it may flow at will

'Mid things that change ; taking no hue from those."

CARTER-BROW.—A lofty ridge, running from west to east, near the source of the river Reed, which, rising near the foot of Carter-Fells, runs in a southern course, and joins the North Tyne near Bellingham. Along the lofty ridge of the Carter passes the Border line between England and Scotland ; and from it the view northward, on a clear day, is one of wonderfully romantic beauty and vast extent. The source of the Coquet is only about three miles east of that of the Reed.

DEWSHILL WOOD.—A natural wood of some extent on the north-west bank of the river below Holystone, or Haly-stane, as that village is more popularly termed. Behind it rise the lofty fells which are to the south of the village of Harbottle.

ELY-HAUGH, OR ELLYHAUGH.—The name of an estate and mansion placed on the north bank of the river Coquet, about half-way between Weldon Bridge and the village of Felton. This portion of the river is well wooded, and the situation is very beautiful.

FELTON.—A neat village, romantically situated beneath the steep banks on the south side of the Coquet, nearly opposite to Felton Park, the seat of a branch of the Riddell family. The village contains a rectory and school, and the river here is again crossed by a stone bridge. It is about nine miles from the sea.

FLOTTERTON.—The name of an estate and mansion on the north bank of the Coquet, between Rothbury and Harbottle. The view across the valley towards the Simondside range of crags is there very good. It is now the seat of the family of Wealleans.

HARE-HAUGH.—A level of considerable extent on the south side of the river, a little above Hepple. It was once the scene of an encounter between the men of Reeds-dale and of Coquet-dale—at least so tradition says.

HARDEN.—A lofty hill near the source of the Coquet.

HARBOTTLE.—A village which stands amongst steep hills near the river Coquet. Behind it, towards the north, is an eminence, or rocky peninsula, round which the stream winds, and upon which are situated such remains as are left of the once strong Border fortress of Harbottle—a feudal stronghold where kings have sojourned and queens have kept their state. Towards the south is a lofty fell, the foot of which is clothed with plantations of fir and larch. Near the summit of this hill stands a remarkably huge upright rock, called “the Drake-stone;” and on its summit is the black and melancholy tarn, known as “Harbottle Lough.” A little below Harbottle stands the seat of the Clennell family, close to the river.

HALY-STANE.—Holy-stone, or Halystane, is a small village placed on the south bank of the river Coquet, a little below Harbottle. It contains an ancient parish church; and near it is a beautiful fountain of sweet and limpid water, called “the Well of Halystane,” which tradition has made famous as the scene of the conversions and baptisms of St Paulinus. Against one of the walls of this church is, or was, an ornamented board, carved and gilded, containing the Decalogue in Roman letter, highly gilded, the work of the ingenious hand of Robert Roxby, who executed the task

when a very young man. The situation of Halystane is striking. Before it sweeps the river, running over wide beds of gravel, amidst which pebbles of great beauty are frequently found. Behind it rise the steep fells to the south of Harbottle, from a dark ravine of which flows a little tributary rivulet, known as "Halystane Burn." Not far from the church is the "holy well of St Paulinus," neatly enclosed, and the area filled with flowering shrubs. The whole scene is very remarkable.

HEPPLE.—A farm-house, very sweetly situated on the north bank of the river, some miles above Rothbury. Near the house are some remains of an old "Peel," or Border tower. Many urns and other Roman antiquities have also been discovered in this vicinity.

HEDLEY WOOD.—An extensive wood, clothing the south bank of the Coquet for some distance below Weldon Bridge.

KEENGIE BURN.—A tributary of the river Coquet. It joins the river, running in from the south, near the Hare-haugh.

LINSHIELS.—Two or three shepherds' houses, a few miles above Alwinton, are thus named. Near them is "Linn Brig," a rude bridge over the Coquet, which is here much enclosed by steep crags, and runs over a rocky bottom.

LINDEN HALL.—The seat of the family of Bigge, on the south side of the Coquet, near Weldon Bridge. It is a modern house, beautifully situated, and commanding an extensive view of this part of the valley of the Coquet. Not far from Linden is the ancient village and hall of Long Horsley.

LITTLE MILL.—A mill situated in a deep and gloomy ravine on the south side of the Coquet, a mile and a half below the town of Rothbury. It is driven by a small burn, or beck, which precipitates itself down this wild glen, and joins the river a little below the water-mill.

ROTHBURY.—A small but antique town, situated on the Coquet, about five miles above Weldon Bridge. There is here an old stone bridge over the river, as well as an ancient parish church, which appears too large for the present population of the place. On the south side of the river stands the rectory, known as "Rothbury Tower," prettily embosomed in wood. This place is much noted for the salubrity of the air, and is consequently the occasional resort of invalids, who drink the milk of the goats with which its hills abound. It is completely sheltered from the east and north; and the walks in its vicinity are very delightful. From Rothbury a road runs across the moors to Alnwick.

REDLEES.—The name of a "syke" or "burn" that runs into Coquet from the south, not far from the Linn Brig. In the neighbourhood of this rivulet are said to be indications both of lead and copper ores; but no attempt at mining has ever been made—a want of enterprise which no angler will lament.

ROWHOPE CRAIGS.—Some wild crags between the river and the borders of Roxburghshire, not many miles below Coquet-head.

SHARPERTON.—A small village on the north side of the Coquet, at no great distance from Harbottle.

SHILMORE.—A range of fells on the north-west of the river towards Cheviot, above Linshiels.

SHILHOPE LAW.—A lofty fell, making a part of the extensive and wild range known as Shilmore.

SIMOND-SIDE, sometimes spelled Simon-side, is a long range of lofty hills, surmounted with crags, which run down the south side of the valley of the Coquet from Harbottle Fells

down to Rothbury. They are covered with heather, and in height are second only to the Cheviot range.

THIRLMOOR.—A large, desolate, and lofty fell, on the side of which the river Coquet has its source, within a very few miles of the source of the river Reed, which runs towards north Tyne.

TOD-STEAD.—A farm-house, sweetly situated on the north bank of the Coquet, about half-way between Weldon Mill and Brinkburn Mill. The windings of the river, through its cultivated and wooded haughs, are here very beautiful.

THRISTLY-HAUGH.—A farm-house on the south bank of the river, nearly opposite to Tod-stead.

THROPTON.—A small and pleasant village, a short distance above Rothbury, on the north bank of the Coquet.

THRUM.—"The Thrum" is a remarkable narrow rocky pass, about half-a-mile below Rothbury, where the waters of the Coquet are confined within bounds so narrow that an active man may leap over. At this romantic spot stands a water-mill called the "Thrum Mill." The river here seems to have cut a way for itself, through the solid rock, for one hundred yards or nearly. "The Strid," through which rushes the river Wharf, in Yorkshire, is of a similar character.

TROWS.—This is the name of a lone farm-house which stands at the confluence of the "Trows Burn" with the Coquet, near the head of the stream, and a little below Blind-burn. The Trows Burn runs in from the south, and after a short course precipitates itself over a crag between twenty and thirty feet high into the river. This rivulet is full of trout, though how they got there is with many a matter for wonder; for a fish to ascend from the Coquet is utterly

impossible. The sonnet here given was composed amidst the scenery near the Trows Burn, of which it is tolerably descriptive :—

“Dost thou remember, friend, that much-lov'd scene,
Where, from the steep hill-side, sheer into day,
The crag breaks forth, all desolate and grey,
Varying with sober tint the mountain green?
It is a wild, but touching spot, I ween.
There springs nor lowly shrub nor leafy spray,
But, mid worn rock, the river wends its way,
Glitt'ring beneath the summer sky serene.
Yet there, upon the rifted crags' mid brow,
Smiling o'er arid moss and lichen sere,
The wild rose flings, into the savage air,
Sweet perfume, from a desert-nurtured bough.
So, to the poet, friend, is still most dear
What nature most neglects. His heart is there.”

WARKWORTH.—A pretty town, with a stone bridge over the Coquet a short distance from its junction with the sea. It is celebrated for its Hermitage, which is made the subject of a ballad by Dr Percy. Here also stands the remains of the old baronial keep of the barons of Warkworth, now the property of the dukes of Northumberland. The castle stands on a steep hill overlooking the tower, round which the Coquet makes its last windings. The tide flows up as far as Warkworth bridge. Above the town is a lock for the capture of salmon-trout, with which the river abounds. Here also are taken in considerable numbers that species of sea-trout called in the north of England “the whitling.” They enter the river in the autumn, rarely leaving the tide-way very far, and afford, it is said, sometimes considerable sport to the fly-fisher. They seldom reach the weight of four pounds. This fish is taken in great plenty in the river Forth towards the town of Stirling. It is much more elegantly formed than the salmon-trout or

bull-trout, and both in shape and flavour comes nearer the salmon, but in hue is more silvery.

WELDON BRIDGE.—A bridge over the Coquet on what used to be called the middle road to Edinburgh, by Rimside Moor, Wooller, Cornhill, Kelso, Lauder, &c. At the north end of the bridge stands a good inn, much frequented by anglers; and above the bridge is Weldon Mill. The situation is a very pleasing one.

WOOD-HALL.—A pleasant house, surrounded with wood, between Sharperton and Harbottle. After passing the ford below Harbottle, Wood-hall stands on the right side of the road towards the river.

WREIGH.—The name of a stream, a tributary to the Coquet, near the confluence of which the village of Thropton stands. On a rising ground near this rivulet was fought a Border skirmish, on a day to which tradition assigns the name of “the woeful Wednesday of the Wreigh Hill.” It abounds with trout, but can only be fished with the artificial fly, after being swelled by rains.

USWAY.—A burn of considerable size, which joins the Coquet in the vicinity of the Linn-brig. It rises between the sources of the Breamish river and the Coquet, and runs through a wild country of much beauty.

THE

Auld Fisher's Invitation to his Friend in Newcastle

TO GANG WI' HIM TO NORTH TYNE TO TAKE ANOTHER
THRAW.

[As this Epistle has reference to the subject of *The Garland*, No. XV., and as it is one of the last compositions, if not the very last, which its author ever penned, it is deemed not improper to give it as an appendix to the Songs, with which it may claim kindred.]

We've fish'd the Coquet's far-fam'd streams
From Blindburn to the sea,
And sung their praise, wi' mony lays,
In strains of minstrelsy.

Nae mair we'll bide at Coquet-side,
Another stream we'll try;
And in North Tyne we'll cast our line,
And thin the finny fry.

We'll bid farewell to Coquet-dale,
Her hills and howes sae green;
To Weldon Inn and the wine-bin,
Where merry days we've seen.

Now the Fa'-stane shall be our hame,
Where heathy heights we'll view,
And take our rest near the moor-hen's nest,
And quaff the mountain dew.

The wintry winds hae ceas'd to rave
Owre Keilder's dreary fell,
The curlew's left the briny wave,
And sought the heather-bell.

And the peewits and plovers a',
Allur'd by spring once more
To their mossy moors an' favourite flow'rs,
Forsake the sounding shore.

The breckan's waving on the braes—
The haughs wi' daisies fine,
And the blithesome birds resume their lays
On the banks o' sweet North Tyne.

The broom shines bright on Mounsey's knowe,
The whin at Thorneyburn,
And the ousel's trill frae Mantle-hill
Proclaims the spring's return.

The wild-rose blooms at Hesleyside,
The primrose at Lea Ha',
Auld North Tyne's buskit like a bride,
Wi' her spring claes sae braw.

From winsome Wark to Simonburn
The trouty streams are fine,
And the anglers hie to throw the fly—
Wha wadna fish the Tyne?

Old Chipchase castle proudly stands
Towerin' aboon them a',
And the lone dove wails i' th' grove
Down at the Chester's Ha'.

The busy bees are on the wing,
Escap'd frae winter's snaw,
And merrily the songsters sing
Frae Chollerford to Wa'.

The dew-drops sparkle on the thorn,
The wind blows frae the west,
Wi' splendour breaks the April morn,
In gold and purple drest.

The welcome sight gives me delight,
And I feel young again ;
The sun's bright beams glint on the streams ;
And the trouts, they rise amain.

I'll don my creel and grip my gad,
Though seventy and twice three ;
Sae seek yer tackle out, my lad,
And thraw anither flee.

And frae the North Tyne's savage source,
Where prowling foxes stray,
We'll range the river's winding course
To South Tyne's sunny brae.

And then I'll wind my tackle up,
The fisher's craft resign,
And bid fareweel to rod an' reel,
And heckle, heuk, and line.

R. R.

NEWCASTLE, *April 30, 1844.*

A I R S

TO WHICH THE PRECEDING SONGS WERE COMPOSED.

Him envy not whose dull and sluggard ear
Nature hath left untuned ;—to whom no tongue
Hath music ;—yea, to whom the air unsung
Hides not a balm t' enrapture or to cheer.
Him envy not—whate'er his station here—
Who recks not of the poesy of sound ;
Or who in liquid melody hath not found
An eloquence that words came never near.
Give me the man to whom th' expressive strain
Is magic ;—who, by his so subtle art,
Joy, sorrow, hope, fear, mem'ry e'en can trace
In tones unsyllabled ;—who wears a chain,
And to first love of song gives up his heart,
As youth does to an eye—or form—or face.

A I R S .

THE MILLER O' DRON.



THEY MAY RAIL AT THIS LIFE.



THE HOWES O' GLENORCHY.



THE HOWES O' GLENORCHY—(Continued.)



AULD LANG SYNE.



GRAMACHREE.

Affettuoso.

L

O WHISTLE AND I'LL COME TO YOU, MY LAD.



BOYNE WATER. (OLD SET.)

Con Fuoco.

AULD SIR SIMON THE KING.

Con Spirito.

TAK' YOUR AULD CLOAK ABOUT YE.

Con Espression.

MY LOVE IS NEWLY LISTED. (NORTHUMBRIAN AIR.)

Affettuoso.

FIE! GAE RUB HER OWRE WI' STRAE.



THE BONNIE GREY-EYED MORN.



JOHN, COME KISS ME.



THE WOMEN ARE A' GANE WUD.

Con Expressione.

CORN RIGGS ARE BONNIE.



HAD I THE WYTE ?

Moderato.

My task is done. I have call'd back the days
Of youth and joy ; ere misadventure, stern,
Taught me her bitter lesson—hard to learn ;
Or fortune frown'd, cold, with averted rays.
Since then, how strewn with thorns have been my ways !
How have I delv'd in many a dreary mine
Of arid lore—urged by my fate's decline !
Or, better—spurr'd by the strong lust of praise !
Yet, let this humble Wreath essay to prove
How I have felt the witchery and the spell
Of vast Creation's variegated store.
Accord the poor meed of a Poet's love ;
And let me rank with them who, though too well
They worshipp'd Fame, have worshipp'd Nature
more.

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(Doubleday)

The Coquet-Dale fishing songs

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